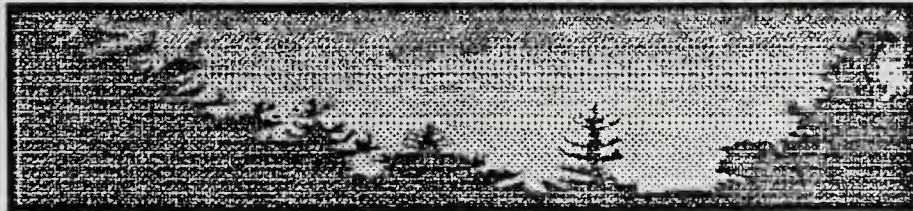


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## Scenic Byways Feasibility Study



### Final Report

Transportation Planning Division  
Montana Department of Transportation

in cooperation with

**Federal Highway Administration**

July, 1994

Prepared by:  
Morrison-Maierle Environmental Corporation  
Helena, Montana  
in cooperation with:  
Design Workshop, Inc.  
and  
Communications Strategies



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## MONTANA SCENIC BYWAYS FEASIBILITY STUDY FINAL REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

The National Scenic Byways Program was established in 1991 by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which also provided funding for state studies. Through this program, Montana received a federal grant with a required state match to hire consultants and conduct a study on the feasibility, scope, and objectives of a scenic byways program in Montana. Program development is not a component of this project. However, depending on the results of this feasibility study, the Department could have the option to pursue enabling legislation and the subsequent development of a scenic byways program.

The consultant team of Morrison-Maierle Environmental Corporation, Communications Strategies, and Design Workshop began the study by taking an in-depth look at what other states have done with their state scenic byways programs. The survey proved to be a valuable tool in the team's efforts towards understanding program components and the means by which they could achieve successful results. The survey showed that some states, such as Idaho, have basic programs that just sign scenic routes while other states have programs which include extensive promotional efforts and public-private partnerships. The San Juan Skyway in Colorado, for example, is widely promoted by the State, Forest Service, and local groups with funds for development from several sources. The survey also found that some states have programs with major problems. In California, for example, the Department of Transportation is attempting to increase the quality and marketability of its program by eliminating routes with marginal scenic values. In general, the contacted states recommended small, high quality programs with extensive promotional efforts.

Once the survey results were analyzed, the study team turned its efforts toward researching what would be most workable for Montana. To ensure valid, applicable study results, they enlisted the help of a 22-member Advisory Committee to act as a constituent-oriented "sounding board" for ideas and recommendations. In selecting the committee, the study team attempted to assemble a group of interested people representing as many constituencies, perspectives, and geographic areas as possible while maintaining a reasonable group size. Throughout the process, committee members were asked to poll their constituencies regarding process issues. Committee members provided input and recommendations on program scope, role, and objectives in addition to potential route designation criteria and ways to develop and manage a program. The Committee's input was valued greatly throughout the study.

Although many recommendations are made throughout the following chapters, general study results show that a scenic byways program is feasible in Montana and that the Department is capable of incorporating a program into its administrative responsibilities. The general recommendation calls for: 1) a quality oriented program with grass-roots initiatives, 2) proven local, state, tribal and federal support, 3) minimal Department overhead, 4) strict adherence to designation criteria, and 5) a proactive oversight and reporting schedule.

The following chapters contain an explanation of the study team's recommendations, including a prioritized list of designation criteria. Chapter 1 presents the 22 member Scenic Byways Advisory Committee and describes the process used in its selection. Chapter 2 investigates potential ramifications associated with the development of a scenic byways program. Chapter 3, *Accommodating Increased Tourism*, considers the Department's existing ability to manage a scenic byways program in terms of funding, administration and other in-house parameters. Chapter 4 profiles potential scenic byways designation criteria while Chapter 5 presents a range of scenic byways alternatives -- including a recommended alternative. Finally Chapter 6 outlines issues that could be expected upon implementation of a program and suggests strategies for program development and preservation of designated routes.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

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Although many recommendations were made throughout the study, general results show that a scenic byways program is feasible in Montana and that the Department is capable of incorporating a program into its administrative responsibilities. The general recommendation calls for: 1) a quality oriented program with grass-roots initiatives, 2) proven local, state, tribal and federal support, 3) minimal Department overhead, 4) strict adherence to designation criteria, and 5) a proactive oversight and reporting schedule. The following pages contain a synopsis of the study team's recommendations, including a prioritized list of designation criteria.

## SCENIC BYWAYS RECOMMENDATIONS

### Mission, Goals and Objectives

The following mission statement incorporates the general principles of the National Scenic Byways Advisory Committee Report and establishes an overall directive from which to govern the Montana Scenic Byways Program.

**Mission:** *Provide all Montanans and guests to the State a quality-oriented system of scenic byways and backways, and ensure the long-term benefits, enjoyment, enhancement, and preservation of the intrinsic values which define their designation, while respecting the integrity of Montana's transportation system.*

Although many criteria must be met for a route to be eligible for consideration as a byway, intrinsic values serve as the foundation of the designation process. The following goals and objectives have been established to further support the intent of the program's mission:

- |                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Goals</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>o Expand the travelling public's awareness of Montana's superb scenic, cultural, historic, recreational, and educational resources.</i></li><li><i>o Protect and enhance the scenic, cultural, historic, recreational, and educational assets within the byways and backways corridors.</i></li><li><i>o Provide alternative opportunities to experience Montana.</i></li><li><i>o Ensure compatibility with other important activities on Montana's transportation system.</i></li><li><i>o Promote and enhance tourism in Montana.</i></li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Objectives</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>o Develop a quality-oriented scenic byways/backways program based on adherence to the mission, goals, and criteria set for designation eligibility.</i></li><li><i>o Encourage proactive, local involvement in the application, planning, management, and commitment to scenic byways.</i></li><li><i>o Require route specific corridor management plans. (To guide applicants through the process of corridor planning, a detailed procedures manual would be developed. The manual would address the public involvement process, securing support from jurisdictional entities, marketing, goals and objectives, etc.)</i></li><li><i>o Develop an active promotion strategy, and continue a statewide, public awareness campaign.</i></li></ul> |

## System Profile

A Montana scenic byways system, if implemented, should be a unified statewide system rather than regional in nature. It should be a "tiered" program to include byways and backways systems with the flexibility to create additional tiers if appropriate.

Because Montana has so many routes that are "off the beaten track", the team determined a two-tiered system was fitting for two primary reasons:

1) It would provide an opportunity for a less formal program, with little or no financial burden on the Department other than signing and promotion. Backways would provide access to a number of Montana's less known scenic, cultural, educational, natural, and recreational opportunities. Backways could bring economic benefits to some of Montana's smallest communities. Because of this potential for economic benefit, smaller communities may choose to take more active roles in establishing byways in their region. This option may allow for some of the stigma and concern over byways to be eased -- possibly making it less prohibitive to establish a byway in the region.

2) A two tiered system would allow the Department to place less emphasis on establishing a quantity based byways program on Montana's highway system, and focus more on a quality based system with fewer designated routes, with more funding and manpower for signing, maintaining, and improving those routes. The combination of backways and byways would be complimentary, for they would be mutually supportive -- that is, they would all be part of the program and mutually accessible.

## Recommended Nomenclature

In order to be more inclusive of what Montana's byways and backways routes represent, the Advisory Committee recommended the name Big Sky Byway or Big Sky Backway to identify the program and individual routes. Conceptually, every route would exhibit a title of Big Sky Byway or Backway. In addition, each route would have a title indicating what the theme of the route is -- based on the intrinsic criteria presented below (i.e., (Name) Scenic Route, (Name) Historic Route, (Name) Recreational Route, etc.).

## Recommended Designation Criteria

The route designation process should be driven by the absolute and specific (non-absolute) criteria identified below rather than a pre-determined number of miles or number of routes in the system.

Strict adherence to criteria guidelines and close scrutiny of applications would be required to ensure a quality rather than quantity oriented program. Designation would be accomplished through a nomination/application process based on criteria which has been weighed according to the importance given to it by the statewide Scenic Byways Advisory Committee.

If an applicant seeks ultimate byways designation at the national level, a greater number of absolute criteria must be met as identified below. If an applicant only seeks designation under the State Program, fewer absolute criteria are required, but the option exists for consideration under the National Program if it also happens to meet those criteria as well.

**Absolute Requirements for National Scenic Byways Nomination**

If the proponent sought designation under the National Scenic Byways Program, the following criteria would be required:

- 1) Route must meet criteria for user safety, user facilities, and local and state plans to maintain the intrinsic values of the corridor through which it passes.
- 2) Route must safely and conveniently accommodate two-wheel-drive automobiles with standard clearances.
- 3) Route must safely and conveniently accommodate, where feasible, bicycle and pedestrian travel.
- 4) Route should be as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
- 5) Corridor management plan must show strong evidence of local support, and continuing advocacy and commitment to the designation of a highway as a scenic byway.
- 6) Route must demonstrate a practical balance between private property rights and the public interest through tools such as land use zoning, conveyance of easements, and economic incentives.
- 7) A corridor management plan must accompany each nomination. Plan must demonstrate how the byway will be operated and managed, how corridor preservation and enhancement will be implemented, and include a map and inventory of existing and planned development.
- 8) Corridor management plan must demonstrate that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and include a plan for making improvements to enhance that experience.
- 9) Corridor management plan must provide an indication that the levels of corridor protection will be highest through areas of greatest intrinsic value.
- 10) Corridor management plan must contain a viable marketing plan describing various measures that would be taken to attract travelers.

**Absolute Requirements for State Scenic Byways Nomination**

If the proponent sought designation under the State Scenic Byways Program only, the following criteria would be required:

- 1) Each route nominated must possess at least one of the following thematic outstanding qualities: 1) scenic/visual; 2) scientific/educational; 3) historic/cultural; 4) natural features; or 5) recreational opportunities.
- 2) Only existing roads that can safely accommodate expected traffic volumes will be

considered for either a scenic byway or backway. Nominated byways (only) must be paved with an identifiable shoulder.

- 3) All nominated routes must have strong local support and commitment to a scenic byways and backways designation, continuing advocacy, and a commitment by the majority of agencies and landowners with jurisdiction adjacent to the proposed route.
- 4) Each agency, entity, or government with jurisdiction and responsibility for any roadway nominated for designation shall approve of any application submitted for a byway or backway designation.
- 5) A corridor management plan consistent with federal, state, tribal, local and other land use/management plans must accompany each nomination.

### **Specific Criteria (non-absolute) to be Considered for Route Nominations**

Whether applying for state designation or ultimate designation under the National Program, the applicant should consider incorporation of other criteria in the proposal to further justify the route's eligibility. The following elements or criteria would also be considered in the application review process.

The evaluation of each application for route designation would be based on how well it meets the absolute requirements identified above and the specific criteria summarized below. The following criteria are not requirements; rather, they are considerations, listed in order of priority, as agreed upon by the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee.

#### **Intrinsic Values**

- o Cultural and historic landmarks
- o Unusual geological formations
- o Outstanding mountains, foothills, & desert scenes
- o Streams, lakes, wetlands
- o Prairie, cactus, & wildflower areas
- o Exceptional pastoral views

#### **Safety and Road Type Conditions**

1. Byways
  - o Route accommodates two-wheel drive, including all RV units.
  - o Route meets all AASHTO standards.
  - o Route is service level C or above.
  - o Route is open year round.
2. Backways
  - o Route is classified as improved gravel.
  - o Route is open year round.
  - o Route requires 4-wheel or high clearance vehicle.

## Roadway Character

1. Byways
  - o Route has minimum length requirement.
  - o Route has identifiable beginning and end points.
  - o Route is visually and physically accessible for elderly and handicapped.
  - o Route is as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
  - o Existing signing does not detract.
  - o Route is a link between existing and proposed points of interest.
  - o Route accommodates alternative usage.
  - o Route is destination in itself.
  - o Route includes complementary facilities.
2. Backways
  - o Route has minimum length requirement.
  - o Route has identifiable beginning and end points.
  - o Existing signing does not detract.
  - o Signing of existing route consolidates w/byways signing.
  - o Route is as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
  - o Route is connecting link between existing and proposed points of interest.
  - o Route is a destination in itself.
  - o Route accommodates alternative usage.
  - o Route includes complementary facilities.

## Local Commitment of Resources (all absolute criteria)

### Compatibility

- o There is a balance between private property rights and the public interest.
- o Existing land use adjacent to the route is compatible with scenic byway objectives.

### Management/Protection

- o A corridor management plan must accompany each nomination.
- o Levels of corridor protection is greatest in areas of highest intrinsic value.
- o Corridor management plan demonstrates that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and includes a plan for making improvements to attract travelers.
- o Corridor management plan contains a viable marketing strategy describing various measures planned to attract travelers.

### Other

- o No major improvements scheduled that would change character.
- o Project is in harmony w/other highway projects.
- o Sufficient land area for facilities.
- o Public demand.
- o Availability and compatibility of existing facilities.
- o Location and distribution across the state.

- o Enhances tourist distribution.
- o Service to major population centers.
- o Loop capabilities.

## **Program Process and Administration**

### **Route Eligibility**

The Department of Transportation will develop an initial system of eligible routes based on absolute criteria relative to roadway characteristics and safety conditions. The Department will also develop a mechanism for the public and other state, local, and federal agencies to suggest additional routes.

This would allow the Department to ensure submission of appropriate route applications without having to commit resources to multitudes of pre-application information requests and follow-up time on inappropriate routes.

### **Nomination Process**

Applications for route designations would come from local, state or federal agencies, or community groups.

### **Review and Selection Process**

Review of the applications would be based on the degree to which each application adhered to both the "absolute" and "non-absolute," or specific criteria, guidelines. This strict adherence would be necessary to ensure the quality-oriented nature of the Program.

Review and recommendation would be the responsibility of a review committee, similar in content to the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee assembled for the initial investigation. It would be a constituent-oriented review committee which had been given a mandate to conduct the review and make recommendations based on the guidelines set forth in the program. Procedurally, Department staff would review applications for completeness before submitting them to the review committee which would, in turn, make designation recommendations to the Highway Commission

### **Administration and Funding**

For the immediate, short-term future, the recommended Scenic Byways/Backways Program will be administered by integrating the planning, management, and budget requirements into existing Department of Transportation capabilities. Management requirements of the byways/backways program would be absorbed by existing staff. No immediate additional budget allocations should be requested.

No additional budget allocations would be requested for management of the Program. Any allocated funding for program management would come from within the existing budget. Despite the general parameters established above, the level of funding along individual routes could result in some routes having more facilities, elaborate entrance signs, and

greater promotional efforts. In these cases, however, the proponents would be required to coordinate with the Department.

### **Facilities and Signing Plans**

The recommended alternative allows for existing facilities such as pull-outs, rest areas, passing lanes, bike paths, etc., to be improved to meet the Scenic Byway objectives, rather than proposing new development. Both the Department's time and resources would be conserved using this alternative. Locational problems associated with existing facilities could be a short-term problem until approved and fully funded facilities could be incorporated into routes.

A basic signing program would be implemented under the recommended alternative. Signs would be of standard MDT specifications (similar to the existing Lewis and Clark Trail signs, etc.) and placed at the beginning and end points of the designated routes. Directional signs would also be located on adjoining routes. Signing issues would require substantial discussions throughout the development of the program due to the many coordination and design questions involved.

### **Program and Route Promotion**

Cooperative efforts between the Department and other agencies, corporations, or public interest groups define the promotional strategy. Combined resources (For example: MDT, Travel MT, etc. and local and private ventures) aimed at aggressively promoting the Scenic Byways Program could be used to effectively increase the awareness of Montana's scenic byways and backways through statewide information meetings (for potential applicants and interested parties), guides and reference materials, travel brochures, convention booths, and write-up on state maps, etc.

### **Intra and Interstate Coordination**

Intrastate and interstate coordination is a necessity for successful implementation of a scenic byways program. To date, all agencies contacted have acknowledged an interest in cooperating with the Department throughout the development of the program and the subsequent designation of individual routes.

In the program development phase of this project, federal, state, tribal, and local governments, neighboring states, and other entities with specific route interests (e.g. Trail of the Great Bear, Lewis and Clark Trail, etc.) will be encouraged to meet with the Department to establish specific cooperative strategies. Strategies for signing, management, funding, and future planning will be discussed, and results formally incorporated into the program. The following is a preliminary list of parties that should be coordinated with closely throughout program development:

- o U.S. Forest Service
- o Bureau of Land Management
- o Tribal governments
- o National Park Service
- o Federal Highway Administration

- o Montana Department of Commerce - Travel Montana
- o Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- o Montana Department of State Lands
- o Cities and Counties (i.e. MACo and League of Cities and Towns)
- o Trail of the Great Bear Coordinators
- o Idaho
- o Wyoming
- o North Dakota
- o South Dakota
- o Canadian provinces

## **Oversight and Reporting**

The following section briefly introduces the general alternatives available for administering the oversight of the individual scenic byways. Oversight is necessary to ensure that the route continues its eligibility as a designated scenic byway. Although overall program oversight will be administered through the Department, route specific oversight can occur at any of the levels identified below. The chosen oversight body would be responsible for preparing annual reports to the Department -- identifying areas of concern and recommendations for additional designation or de-designation.

Route specific oversight committees would be established on an assignment or volunteer basis. These committees would be multi-disciplinary by design -- comprised of individuals from both the private and public sectors. Each committee would be responsible for overseeing compliance activities on the specific route(s) within their area. This option is often readily accepted because it allows the local presence to self-regulate the route's compliance rating. In many cases, the local oversight committee is the most effective since it is their own community that could be affected by de-designation procedures. In addition, it is often less costly in terms of administrative, personnel, and financial resources for the Department to support such local efforts.

## **De-Designation Proceedings**

To maintain the quality oriented nature of the Program, there would need to be a de-designation process built into the administrative capabilities of the Department. It was determined that there would be two circumstances which would determine when a route should be considered for de-designation: 1) when a community(ies) no longer wants its route designated (voluntary removal), and 2) when a segment(s) of a designated route has violated the restrictions set forth in the Corridor Management Plan (non-conformance).

A removal process allowing a route to be voluntarily de-designated would have to include a public meeting of the stakeholders involved. Voluntary delisting would be given careful and serious consideration before action could be implemented. During the nomination phases of the process, all route proponents would be required to ensure that all stakeholders clearly understand the pros and cons of designating routes in their area.

Non-conformance will be measured against the terms or restrictions set out in the Corridor Management Plan. To provide fair assessment of non-compliance, independent route review teams including public volunteers and Department of Transportation staff, should

conduct annual audits to ensure conformance. (Local representatives from each of the areas with scenic byway/backway designations could be included as members of the review teams.) If a route is in non-conformance, action should be taken to help the community(ies) resolve the problems. If the problems cannot be resolved, recommendation would be made to the Highway Commission to de-designate that route. (Maintaining conformance could be nurtured by developing an oversight committee of local people who could regularly assess public attitudes, monitor non-conformance changes, and act as a liaison to the review team.)

## INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Upon approval to proceed by the Highway Commission and subsequent passage of a byways bill by the Montana Legislature, the Department would be able to proceed with the development of a scenic byways program. Findings from the Scenic Byways Feasibility Study would be the basis for the development of Program components. Changes in the program directive and the possible addition of stipulations by either the Commission or Legislature could alter the general recommendations and format presented herein. The following general approach outlines the development of the program and is presented on the assumption that the recommendations made in this investigation would be maintained. It was aligned with programmatic formats of neighboring states in an added effort to emphasize the coordination needs with these states.

### Introduction

The introduction to the Scenic Byways Program would include 1) a discussion of it's history, 2) federal legislation and the National Scenic Byways Committee, 3) state legislation and the feasibility study effort, 4) purpose of the program, 5) timeframes, and 6) program components.

### Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Section II of the Program would reiterate the Department's mission, goals, and objectives as set forth in the Scenic Byways Feasibility Study. It would discuss their importance in Program development and would serve as a reminder of the Program's prime directive.

### Master Planning Process

This section would discuss a process for developing a master list of eligible routes across the State and a master plan outlining distribution and management principles. The master plan would be a subcomponent of the Scenic Byways Program, and would serve as an internal guide for program management. It would be route/system specific, whereas the Program would be programmatic in nature -- not addressing specific routes.

### Byways/Backways Nomination Criteria

This section would discuss the nomination criteria as resolved in the Scenic Byways Feasibility Study. It would provide a general discussion on how the criteria would be used and the relative importance (internal weighting) given to each.

### Nomination (Application), Review and Selection Process

Section V would establish the parameters for nominating, reviewing and selecting scenic byways and backways. For nominations, it would describe in detail application materials, eligible applicants, application procedures, submittal, and public involvement requirements.

### Intra and Interstate Coordination

Coordination efforts would be detailed in three components: 1) Interdepartmental coordination would be discussed in an effort to ensure accurate exchange of information between planning, engineering, maintenance, and budget sections. Additionally, it would provide for open communications between the Department headquarters in Helena and the district engineer offices statewide.

2) A framework for interagency coordination would be developed to ensure open channels of communication between the Department and other State, Federal, Tribal, and local governments. Coordination would be required with these agencies in the areas of designation, signing, maintenance, improvements, funding, de-designation, etc.

3) The Program must address multi-state coordination in an effort to foster a cooperative approach towards a multi-state network of scenic byways. Coordination efforts should focus on designation strategies, corridor management planning, funding, and preservation techniques.

### Corridor Management Plan Guidelines

This portion of the Program narrative would provide detailed guidance for developing a corridor management plan. As discussed throughout this study, it is essential that the route proponent develop a corridor management plan as part of the application process. The application package should contain a very detailed section on corridor plan development, addressing goals and objectives, guidelines, and examples. It should also contain an application narrative that delineates both absolute and consideration criteria for designation.

### Program Responsibilities

This section would detail the responsibilities associated with management of the Scenic Byways Program. It would identify Department and personnel responsibilities for each of the following: 1) program management, 2) signing, 3) maintenance, and 4) construction and improvements.

### Marketing Strategies

Section X would provide general guidelines and options for marketing either individual byways/backways or the entire network. It would offer options for internal as well as cooperative efforts with public and private entities. Goals and objectives would be highlighted with specific action items discussed in detail.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The Department's policy for oversight of the Program would be presented in this section. It would identify the procedures and criteria for selecting the route-specific oversight committees. In addition, it will establish a protocol and guidelines for the committees' review of routes, and proceedings for reporting findings to the Department.

### De-Designation

Finally, the Program will detail the necessary steps to be taken if a route were to no longer meet the final designation criteria included in the Program. It would identify reporting procedures, public involvement requirements, administrative responsibilities, and decommissioning of the route as a scenic byway/backway.

### Appendices

The appendices will provide examples, supplemental support documents, and the background data necessary for program implementation.

## GENERAL OUTLINE FOR CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

The principle baseline and enforcement tool in a scenic byways program is the Corridor Management Plan. A corridor management plan would provide the Department and the proponent with a "plan of operations" for the proposed route. The plan serves as the primary guide used by the Department and the route's oversight committee to track the route's successes and areas needing improvement. The following outline offers a very conceptual approach to the content necessary in a corridor management plan. Although detailed, the plan serves as yet another assurance that only the serious proponents pursue designation of routes. This would ensure that only the highest quality byway and backway proposals be forwarded for review and subsequent designation.

### I. Purpose

- A. Prioritized byway/backway theme (scenic, recreational, historic/cultural, natural, scientific/educational, etc.)
- B. Mission statement
- C. Goals and objectives

### II. Description of Byways/Backway Resources by Theme -- including a general description of the thematic nature of the proposed route and a comprehensive listing of the thematic resources along the route.

- A. Scenic
- B. Recreation
- C. Historic/cultural
- D. Natural
- E. Scientific/educational

### III. Description of Route Characteristics (non-thematic)

- A. Land use
- B. Access
- C. Roadway characteristics (paved, shoulders, condition, etc.)
- D. Environmental hazard
- E. Communities (how many, how large, etc.)

### IV. Development and Protection of Resources and Infrastructure

- A. Detailed description of proposed byway/backway length and origination/termination points (by mile markers)
- B. Detailed description of proposed byway/backway attributes (signs, interpretative kiosks, facility improvements, developments, etc.)
- C. Description of existing land use/management plans along the proposed byway/backway.
- D. Detailed description of protection and oversight techniques (as described in this report)

## V. Public Involvement Plan

- A. Preliminary planning meeting
- B. Corridor information meeting (consensus building process)
- C. Local commitments
- D. Oversight meetings

## VI. Marketing and Promotion

- A. Identify potential markets
- B. General marketing strategy

## VII. Organization and Management

- A. MDT coordination (liaison, schedules, reports, etc.)
- B. MOU's and other agreements
- C. Documentation of necessary support and local commitment.
- D. Oversight committee recruitment and procedures

## VIII. Funding and Financing

- A. Types, sources, and allocation schedules of committed funding
- B. Identification of potential funding sources
- C. Strategies for seeking potential funding

## IX. Implementation

- A. Schedule of activities (upon approval and funding)
- B. Coordination with MDT (physical efforts)
- C. Reporting procedures (to MDT)
- D. Initiation of evaluation and monitoring program

## X. Evaluation, Monitoring and Reporting

- A. Review progress of individual strategies (funding, implementation, oversight, etc.)
- B. Oversight
  - 2. program compliance oversight
    - a. compliance with protocols
    - b. compliance with program criteria, missions, goals and objectives
    - c. compliance with route mission, goals and objectives
- C. Reporting procedures

## DEVELOPMENT OF SCENIC BYWAYS GUIDE

The Montana Scenic Byways Guide would be organized in a simple, color coded format for quick reference. The guide would be organized by theme (i.e. historic, scenic, educational, recreational or natural), and would include the discussion of byways and backways within that theme. Narrative descriptions of each route would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

The introduction to the guide would profile the Scenic Byways Program and describe how the guide could be used to facilitate a better understanding of the byways system. It would also include a description of the color coded interpretive tabs that allow for quick reference.

The introduction would present general precautions for consideration when travelling the scenic byways system. Because many byways and backways may be off the beaten path, advanced planning information, such as fuel and emergency supplies would be presented.

Finally, the introduction would welcome all readers to the individual byways. It would serve to promote enthusiasm in travelling the routes, and offer a discussion on the benefits of using the byways system.

Subsequent chapters would be organized by theme with a unique color code system for easy reference. A narrative description of each byway/backway within the individual themes would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

A cross-reference section, or index, would be organized in a way that allows for alternative retrieval of byway and backway information. For example, if a motorist knew the name of the route, but wasn't sure what thematic category it would fall under, he/she could look up the name in the index and find out what page in the guide the route could be found.

The layout and design of the guide would be variable depending on the level of funding available for its development. If sufficient funds were available, the guide could be printed in a full-color, glossy format, with photos of each route and an "eye-catching" cover. If however, few funds were available, the guide could be printed on standard paper, with no photos and a very basic cover.

## PRESERVATION TECHNIQUES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Land use controls and other protective measures may be essential factors when considering the eligibility of a route for scenic byway status, or these controls may follow designation of a scenic byway in order to maintain and protect the critical resources. Only the states of California, Connecticut, and Oregon consider existing land use controls and other protective measures to be criteria for scenic byway designation. Other states either have, or are interested in developing, some form of protection for their scenic byways.

The selection of the type and level of controls appropriate for a particular scenic byway/backway or scenic byway/backway system should be based on the goals and objectives of the program as well as an understanding of who the route proponent is. This study recommended that the Department oversee the program and provide enabling legislation, that local agencies and/or citizen groups be responsible for applying for byways/backways designation as well as meeting all the criteria presented in this study. Under these circumstances it would be appropriate to integrate controls for scenic byways into the local agencies' regulations. The State may provide guidelines, information, and education.

Only a small proportion of states have land use controls on their scenic byways, although there is interest in developing better systems of protection for scenic byways. The first step is to develop a byway/backway corridor management plan which describes the resources along the byway and the goals for their protection. Following the development of this plan, appropriate protection techniques may be selected and implemented. Currently, in Colorado and several other states, local scenic byway groups are being encouraged to develop corridor management plans.

### Existing Conditions in Montana

When considering the need and appropriateness of land use and other protection techniques, it is important to review conditions in the State of Montana. Generally, Montana is typical of western states where the historic philosophy has been one of rugged individualism. In this context, minimal land use controls have been implemented. However, recent changes, including increased tourism and population, with associated land development pressures, have led some of these areas to adopt forms of land use control and protection measures. Presently in Montana 36 out of 56 counties have completed comprehensive plans; all 128 municipalities and 56 counties have subdivision regulations; 21 municipalities have zoning; and no counties have jurisdiction wide zoning -- although 6 counties have areas of citizen initiated zoning districts (Design Workshop, 1992).

### Land and Resource Protection Techniques

A scenic corridor includes much more than just the roadway pavement, right-of-way area, and adjacent roadside. Included within its boundaries are elements that make up outstanding scenic vistas as well as the facilities for enjoying them. The features found within these areas may include lakes, streams, and wetlands; striking forest lands; beautiful desert or mountain views; pastoral views and vibrant urban scenes; and cultural and historic resources. In areas of flat terrain or on high ground, the corridor may extend for miles in horizon to horizon vistas. The width of scenic corridors may narrow in valleys or roadways lined with dense forests or other foliage.

The aesthetic quality of scenic corridors is easily compromised however. Strip commercial development, garish signs, billboards, poorly designed residential development, and incompatible uses such as unbuffered gravel pits, junkyards, mines, and industrial facilities can irreparably mar an otherwise attractive landscape. On the other hand, a program that encourages appropriate design for commercial development, appropriate signage, buffered industrial facilities, and creative residential siting can improve property values and increase tourism.

In an effort to protect the scenic, cultural and historic resources found along designated scenic corridors, many communities have adopted a wide variety of scenic resource protection techniques. This study provides a summary of the techniques, adapted from "Scenic Resource Protection Techniques and Tools" that could be considered in future planning and protection efforts.

## FINAL REPORT

The study team's final report contains a description of its recommendations, including a prioritized list of designation criteria. Chapter 1 presents the 22 member Scenic Byways Advisory Committee and describes the process used in its selection. Chapter 2 investigates potential ramifications associated with the development of a scenic byways program. Chapter 3, *Accommodating*

*Increased Tourism*, considers the Department's existing ability to manage a scenic byways program in terms of funding, administration and other in-house parameters. Chapter 4 profiles potential scenic byways designation criteria while Chapter 5 presents a range of scenic byways alternatives -- including a recommended alternative. Finally Chapter 6 outlines issues that could be expected upon implementation of a program, and suggests strategies for program development and preservation of designated routes.



## MONTANA SCENIC BYWAYS FEASIBILITY STUDY FINAL REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

The National Scenic Byways Program was established in 1991 by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which also provided funding for state studies. Through this program, Montana received a federal grant with a required state match to hire consultants and conduct a study on the feasibility, scope, and objectives of a scenic byways program in Montana. Program development is not a component of this project. However, depending on the results of this feasibility study, the Department could have the option to pursue enabling legislation and the subsequent development of a scenic byways program.

The consultant team of Morrison-Maierle Environmental Corporation, Communications Strategies, and Design Workshop began the study by taking an in-depth look at what other states have done with their state scenic byways programs. The survey proved to be a valuable tool in the team's efforts towards understanding program components and the means by which they could achieve successful results. The survey showed that some states, such as Idaho, have basic programs that just sign scenic routes while other states have programs which include extensive promotional efforts and public-private partnerships. The San Juan Skyway in Colorado, for example, is widely promoted by the State, Forest Service, and local groups with funds for development from several sources. The survey also found that some states have programs with major problems. In California, for example, the Department of Transportation is attempting to increase the quality and marketability of its program by eliminating routes with marginal scenic values. In general, the contacted states recommended small, high quality programs with extensive promotional efforts.

Once the survey results were analyzed, the study team turned its efforts toward researching what would be most workable for Montana. To ensure valid, applicable study results, they enlisted the help of a 22-member Advisory Committee to act as a constituent-oriented "sounding board" for ideas and recommendations. In selecting the committee, the study team attempted to assemble a group of interested people representing as many constituencies, perspectives, and geographic areas as possible while maintaining a reasonable group size. Throughout the process, committee members were asked to poll their constituencies regarding process issues. Committee members provided input and recommendations on program scope, role, and objectives in addition to potential route designation criteria and ways to develop and manage a program. The Committee's input was valued greatly throughout the study.

Although many recommendations are made throughout the following chapters, general study results show that a scenic byways program is feasible in Montana and that the Department is capable of incorporating a program into its administrative responsibilities. The general recommendation calls for: 1) a quality oriented program with grass-roots initiatives, 2) proven local, state, tribal and federal support, 3) minimal Department overhead, 4) strict adherence to designation criteria, and 5) a proactive oversight and reporting schedule.

The following chapters contain an explanation of the study team's recommendations, including a prioritized list of designation criteria. Chapter 1 presents the 22 member Scenic Byways Advisory Committee and describes the process used in its selection. Chapter 2 investigates potential ramifications associated with the development of a scenic byways program. Chapter 3, *Accommodating Increased Tourism*, considers the Department's existing ability to manage a scenic byways program in terms of funding, administration and other in-house parameters. Chapter 4 profiles potential scenic byways designation criteria while Chapter 5 presents a range of scenic byways alternatives -- including a recommended alternative. Finally Chapter 6 outlines issues that could be expected upon implementation of a program and suggests strategies for program development and preservation of designated routes.

## CHAPTER 1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### TASK DESCRIPTION

The first step in the investigation of a Montana scenic byways program was to establish an Advisory Committee that would provide input on recommendations made to the Montana Department of Transportation by the Morrison-Maierle Environmental team. The Committee played a key role in reviewing interim findings and providing regional guidance for program development. Morrison-Maierle Environmental and Communications Strategies' initial task was to develop a list of potential participants in the Committee. The fundamental goal in forming the Committee was to establish equitable representation from interested constituent groups.

### TASK PREPARATIONS

In preparation for development of an Advisory Committee, Morrison-Maierle Environmental and Communications Strategies met with Department of Transportation officials to gather input and Department recommendations for committee member components. Using the list generated during that preliminary meeting as a foundation, Communications Strategies began the task of expanding the list of potential candidates to include other parties appropriate for achieving an "across-the-board" team profile. This goal was established to ensure representation from the full spectrum of diverse interests concerned with the outcome of the scenic byways investigation. The following interest groups were deemed necessary for inclusion on the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee:

- |   |                                              |   |                                           |
|---|----------------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------------|
| o | <i>Montana Department of Transportation</i>  | o | <i>Environmental</i>                      |
| o | <i>National Scenic Byways Adv. Committee</i> | o | <i>Bureau of Land Management</i>          |
| o | <i>Montana Department of Commerce</i>        | o | <i>Montana Department of Fish,</i>        |
| o | <i>United States Forest Service</i>          |   | <i>Wildlife and Parks</i>                 |
| o | <i>Federal Highway Administration</i>        | o | <i>National Park Service</i>              |
| o | <i>AAA Montana</i>                           | o | <i>Montana State Legislature</i>          |
| o | <i>Montana Historical Society</i>            | o | <i>Native American Tribal Governments</i> |
| o | <i>Agriculture</i>                           | o | <i>Montana Motor Carriers Association</i> |
| o | <i>Timber</i>                                | o | <i>Outdoor Advertising</i>                |
| o | <i>Tourism</i>                               | o | <i>Local Government</i>                   |
| o | <i>Recreation</i>                            | o | <i>Montana Association of Planners</i>    |

Recommendations were then solicited from within each interest group, and in some cases outside each group, for individuals most appropriate and willing to hold a seat on the Advisory Committee upon request by the Department. The following persons agreed to serve on the 22 member committee:

**SCENIC BYWAYS PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE*****Montana Department of Transportation***

Gary Gilmore, Operations Engineer  
Montana Department of Transportation  
2701 Prospect Avenue, Rm. 215  
Helena, MT 59620  
(406) 444-6005

Oversees district highway operations which include construction and maintenance activities, as well as some headquarters PE activities.

***National Scenic Byways Advisory Committee***

Homer Staves, Vice President of Customer Service  
KOA Kampgrounds of America  
P.O. Box 30558  
Billings, Montana 59114  
(406) 248-7444

Member of the National Scenic Byways Advisory Committee and a prominent figure in the tourism industry.

***Montana Department of Commerce***

Clint Blackwood  
Montana Department of Commerce  
Travel Montana  
1424 9th Avenue  
Helena, MT 59620  
(406) 444-4366

Works with the interagency committee on tourism, rural tourism development, and with tribal governments on development of the tribal tourism industry.

***U.S. Forest Service***

Bill Harper and Fred Bower  
U. S. Forest Service, Regional Office  
Federal Building, 200 E. Broadway  
Missoula, MT 59807  
(406) 329-3511

Responsible for coordinating FS regional scenic byways activities.

***Federal Highways Administration***

Dave Miller, Planning and Research Coordinator  
U. S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highways Administration, Montana Division

301 South Park Street, Room 448  
Helena, MT 59626  
(406) 449-5314

Provides input and expertise from the FWHA perspective.

### ***AAA Montana***

Wesley Choc, President  
AAA Montana  
2100 11th Avenue  
P.O. Box 4129  
Helena, MT 59601  
(406) 442-5920

Represents diverse tourism and Montana motorist issues and provide input on traveler information in Montana.

### ***Montana Historical Society***

Marcella Sherfy  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Montana Historical Society  
P.O. Box 201202  
Helena, Mt 59620-1202  
(406) 444-7715

Experienced in signage issues and requirements of the Historic Preservation Act.

### ***Agriculture***

John Bloomquist  
P.O. Box 1418  
Dillon, MT 59725

(406) 683-4301

Responsible for MT Stockgrowers Association's legislative and regulatory work.

### ***Natural Resources***

Peggy Trenk, Executive Director  
Western Environmental Trade Association  
Aspen Court  
33 S. Last Chance Gulch, Suite 2B  
Helena, Montana 59601  
(406) 443-5541

Director of industry group that includes natural resource interests (timber, mining, etc.)

**Tourism**

Dottie Maitland, Owner  
Maitland Travel Association  
38 2nd Street East  
Kalispell, MT 59901  
(406) 755-1032

Owner of a travel agency/tour company and President of the National Tour Operator's Association. Organizer of the 1991 Scenic Byways Conference.

**Recreation**

John Williams, Program Manager  
BikeCentennial  
P.O. Box 8308  
Missoula, MT 59807

Program Manager for national nonprofit organization that works with state and federal departments (Transportation, Forest Service) providing mapping services, bicycle facility planning, design & implementation. John Williams writes *Bicycle Forum* and conducts workshops on bicycle facilities, planning & design.

**Environmental**

Louise Bruce, President  
Montana Wilderness Association  
Box 928  
Dillon, Montana 59725  
(406) 683-6437

Environmental educator involved in statewide environmental issues.

**Bureau of Land Management**

John Kwiatkowski, Deputy State Director  
Lands Renewable Resources  
P.O. Box 36800  
Billings, MT 59107  
(406) 255-2914

Represents federal land management agency with existing backways program.

**Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

Bob Walker, Coordinator  
Statewide Trails Program  
1420 East 6th  
Helena, MT 59620  
(406) 444-4585

Coordinator of the Statewide Trails Program (snowmobile, cross country ski, hiking, horseback, bicycle, ORV, etc).

### ***National Parks***

Eddy Lopez and Mike McWright  
Grant Kohrs Ranch  
Deer Lodge, MT 59722  
(406) 846-2070

Coordinators of statewide and regional issues for national parks involving national trails, scenic corridors, parks, and recreation.

### ***Legislature***

Senator Don Bianchi  
490 Secretariat Circle  
Belgrade, MT 59714  
(406) 388-4029

Chairs the Senate Natural Resources Committee and is a member of the Senate Finance and Fish & Game Committees.

### ***Native American Tribes***

Wesley Main  
American Indian Technology Transfer Center  
Montana State University  
Bozeman, Montana 59717-0390  
(406) 994-6559

Member of the Fort Belknap Tribe. Under contract to MSU LTAP Center to provide technical assistance to tribal governments on transportation issues.

Cordel Ringell  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
316 N. 26th  
Billings, MT 59101

Along with other duties, manages Indian Reservation Roads (IRR) Program.

### ***Montana Motor Carriers Association***

Kim Schulke, Administrative Assistant  
Montana Motor Carriers Association  
P.O. Box 1714  
Helena, Montana 59624  
(406) 442-6600

Familiar with statewide motor carrier issues.

### ***Local Governments***

Cheryl Beatty, City/County Manager  
Anaconda - Deer Lodge  
800 South Main  
Anaconda, MT 59711  
(406) 563-8421 Ext.201

Represents interests of both cities and counties.

### ***Outdoor Advertising***

Aidan Myhre  
Myhre Advertising  
151 Helena Avenue  
Helena, Montana 59601  
(406) 442-3266

Represents the outdoor advertising industry.

### ***Montana Association of Planners***

Doug Smith, Planning Director  
Sheridan County  
P.O. Box 191  
Plentywood, MT 59254

Represents the planning community and provides expertise on land use, transportation, urban and regional planning.

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION**

Upon MDT's review and ultimate selection of Advisory Committee members, MME team members contacted the respective individuals and formally requested their participation. General information was provided during that initial contact in regards to project background, schedules, roles, and operational sideboards. The members received an information packet that describes these areas in greater detail. This package was submitted to MDT for review prior to receipt by committee members. A copy of the information package is included in this report (Appendix B).

## **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

A press release was prepared for review and distribution by the Department. The release addressed the inception of the scenic byways concept, notification of Advisory Committee appointees, start-up of the planning process and where the process goes from here...including opportunities for public input. The official news release is included in this report (Appendix B).





## CHAPTER 2 POTENTIAL RAMIFICATIONS

### TASK DESCRIPTION

Chapter 2 provides a preliminary assessment of the potential ramifications associated with the development of a scenic byways program. This preliminary analysis provides an opportunity to determine what internal responsibilities would be required, what public interest can be expected, and what physical issues will likely arise throughout the process.

### TASK PREPARATION

Potential ramifications of the Montana Scenic Byways Program were identified through a comparative analysis of select byways programs currently active in other states. The 1990 National Scenic Byways Study Inventory was used to identify a range of states that had successful byways programs and were similar to Montana in at least one of 4 categories:

- o Legislative vs. non-legislative program
- o Geographic and historic characteristics
- o Funding scenarios
- o Tourism/population similarities

Seven states were identified that would serve to establish the general profile. Colorado, Washington, Utah, California, Wisconsin, Maine, and Idaho were contacted and provided with a list of 28 questions regarding their respective byways program. The following questions were asked of each state:

1. What are the goals and objectives of your Byways Program?
2. What coordination efforts have taken place with neighboring states regarding route designations, signing, and maintenance?
3. What classification of roads are eligible for designation (i.e. primary, secondary, county, etc.)?
4. What percentage of your byways system is on each of these classifications?
5. Which of these route classifications require the most attention from the managing authority (i.e. vandalism, pavement mgmnt, signing, etc.)?
6. In retrospect, Which route classifications are considered the best for scenic byways?
7. Based on your experience, Is there a benefit to establishing a scenic byways master plan from which individual byways are selected.
8. How is the public involved in your program? And, in retrospect, What recommendations can you offer for an appropriate level of public involvement throughout each phase of the process?
9. How is your program funded? What alternative funding sources have been considered.
10. If state funds were mostly used without federal or private assistance, Were there internal conflicts regarding the funding of the program? If so, What steps were taken to satisfy all concerns?
11. Since the 1990 survey, Do you have any cost per mile estimates for operation and management of your scenic byways program?
12. Does the designation of scenic byways result in greater use by alternative modes of transportation (e.g. bicycles, etc.)?
13. Is your byways system part of a larger recreational network?
14. How do you integrate manmade landscape change with natural scenery? For instance, Are towns, agricultural areas, and industrial areas included in scenic byways? Do you coordinate with private

- land owners and business people? What mutual benefits are gained?
15. Do you have a marketing/promotional program? What is your sense of the program's impact on a) visitor numbers? b) economics? c) land use?
  16. Does your program require any land use controls to protect the visual quality of your scenic byways? If so, What are they? Who administers/ implements them? How were they adopted? What enabling legislation was used to develop them? Which are most successful? What problems have you encountered?
  17. What, if any, liability cases have resulted from the designation of scenic byways?
  18. What programmatic efforts are made to work with other agencies and programs to ensure an accurate message regarding the definition of a scenic byway?
  19. What is the shortest and longest byway in your system? What is the average length?
  20. Since the 1990 survey, What is the annual cost of maintaining your Byways Program?
  21. What is your estimated man-hour utilization at the management, technical, and field levels?
  22. What impact did route designation have on traffic volume and vehicle type usage?
  23. Does your Byways Program restrict heavy and/or long vehicles?
  24. Is there a measurable difference in accident rates attributable to designation?
  25. What is the greatest cause of safety concerns (accidents) on your byways?
    - o geometrics (curves, downgrades, etc.)
    - o roadside maintenance (mowing, tree trimming, etc.)
    - o environmental features (trees, embankments, outcrops, etc.)
    - o speed
  26. Has there been a realized economic benefit to local communities that is attributable to the designation of byway routes in your state?
  27. What logo did your state adopt as official byways logo?
  28. What future direction do you foresee for your program?
  29. What constraints, if any, have scenic byway designations put on your ability to improve or upgrade highways?
  30. Have traffic increases due to scenic byway designation caused premature roadway deterioration with resulting increases in maintenance costs?

The responses provided by each state were compiled and summarized (Appendix A). Conclusions and recommendations were recorded and a general profile was prepared for use throughout the remainder of the preliminary analysis. This profile is provided below in its entirety.

*1. What are the goals and objectives of your Byways Program?*

Each state referred to the 1990 inventory. Goals can vary from scenic protection, to interpretation/education, economic development, and tourism promotion.

*2. What coordination efforts have taken place with neighboring states regarding route designations, signing, and maintenance?*

With the exception of the Tri-State Coastal Route, (California, Oregon, and Washington) and the Trail of the Anasazi, very little emphasis is placed on coordination of route designation, signing, and maintenance with neighboring states. Typically, states find it difficult enough to manage the state effort, given budget limitations, agency coordination, and individual designation procedures. The general feeling is that the process is complicated enough without having to add another level of coordination, development, maintenance and management. However, cooperative efforts can lead to increased funding opportunities.

3. *What classification of roads are eligible for designation?*

Other than the Rustic Roads program in Wisconsin, where only county and local roads are eligible, and the Backways program in Utah, where only county and local roads are eligible, most states consider all route classifications as eligible. Many stipulate that the routes must be paved, winter maintained, and two lane. However, since most state and federal routes meet these requirements, most are eligible. Typically interstate systems are not eligible.

4. *What percentage of your byways system is on each of these classifications?*

There was only one state interviewed (Idaho) that had the number or miles of byways broken down by road classifications. Other than states like Wisconsin and Utah, that have rustic roads or backways on county and local roads only, most byways are found on the full spectrum of classifications from principal arterial to minor collector. In regard to which states are better from the management and maintenance standpoint, those hosting byways on a variety of classifications seem to have no preference or recommendations. For the most part they all receive the same amount of attention.

5. *Which of these route classifications require the most attention from the managing authority.*

Because maintenance and management were not even a line item on most budgets, no particular classification received, or required, more attention than another. In some communities where the local effort was active, those routes received more local attention, but the attention from the State is about evenly divided. The only real problems identified were related to vandalism and sign theft.

6. *In retrospect, which route classifications are considered the best for scenic byways?*

Each state, with the exception of California, responded similarly by saying that they wouldn't change their program, and that no particular route was considered best for designation. California responded by saying, that in retrospect, they would reduce the number of designated routes, spend more funding on those routes, and possibly limit them to some level of classification.

7. *Is there a benefit to establishing a scenic byways master plan from which individual byways are selected?*

The general feeling among states is that some level of master planning is necessary, but the planning process should stop short of having an authority, dictated by the master plan, over the State's designation of routes. The master plan should be more programmatic in nature, in that it shouldn't address specific routes and their respective preservation or management plans. Rather, it should identify all routes in the State that are eligible for designation, identify the range of preservation techniques, discuss management guidelines, and formulate a framework for local initiative. Once individual routes are designated, by whatever process is adopted, then management plans for each should be developed that tier from the programmatic master plan. Programs that operate within an overall conceptual framework are most successful.

8. *How is the public involved in your program? What recommendations can you offer for an appropriate level of public involvement throughout each phase of the process?*

In general, the public was involved at two different levels. The first was at the grass roots level of project initiation, whereby members of the public worked the petitions within their local regions for initiation of designation procedures (nominations). They then circulated information and promoted the ideas.

The second level of public participation came through the public hearing process, whereby designation was applied for, and the managing agency held public meetings to discuss the potential designation. In Utah, for instance, the eleven member advisory committee was used to vote on candidate routes. Upon receipt of one negative vote, the committee would enter a public hearing process.

- 9 *How is your program funded? What alternative funding sources have been considered?*

Funding options ranged from full reliance on the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) enhancement funds to public/private ventures where federal, state, and private sources of funding were used. The combination of funding seemed to work the best. The cooperative nature of the funding programs translated into more widely accepted designations. However, the concern was raised that joint funding meant more administration and therefore, the potential for conflict between sources.

10. *If state funds were mostly used without federal or private assistance, Were there internal conflicts regarding the funding of the program? If so, What steps were taken to satisfy all concerns?*

There was very little internal strife reported. Since most roads in the West traverse several agency jurisdictions, cooperative agreements that spell out the individual responsibilities and game rules, are usually signed up front.

11. *Since the 1990 survey, do you have any cost-per-mile estimates for operation and management of your Scenic Byways Program?*

No states had a cost-per-mile estimate for their program. Since most of the states interviewed undertook maintenance and construction as a part of their regular program, there was no attempt to separate out expenses. Most byways programs were not even a line item in the budget.

12. *Does the designation of scenic byways result in greater use by alternative modes of transportation?*

Very little information was available on alternative usage of designated routes. However, those programs that were actively promoting the byways system did notice an increase in the usage. There seem to be connections between scenic byways designation, alternative transportation, recreation, and interpretation.

13. *Is your byways system part of a larger recreational network?*

No state programs were part of a state recreation plan, other than being a component in the statewide recreation and travel brochures. In order to network, there would have to be a larger management authority or some sort of memorandum of understanding (MOU) between participating agencies. This could create some extensive coordination efforts. An expanded discussion of these coordination efforts will be included in Chapter 5.

14. *Integration of manmade landscape changes with natural scenery? Coordination with private land owners and business people? Mutual benefits?*

Most scenic byways are rural in nature with intermittent passage through small towns, and even industrial areas. Coordination with private landowners and businesses is more successful when the land use preservation effort is locally generated...especially through the grass roots level of preservation promotion.

15. *Do you have a marketing/promotional program? What is its impact on the Byways Program?*

Promotional and marketing programs definitely increased awareness, and in some cases, use, of the byways systems. However, most felt that word of mouth and an effective signing program served to make travelers aware of the program without overloading the system. Less promotion is necessary for the backways programs (Wisconsin and Utah) because the intent is to maintain the "slow-paced" nature of these routes. However, promotion of byways through travel guides and magazine write-ups did increase awareness and usage of the byways routes. The United States Forest Service (USFS) has a fairly aggressive program and has witnessed defined increase in usage.

16. *Does your program require any land use controls to protect the visual quality of your scenic byways?*

Most scenic byways programs have recommendations for land use preservation, but offer no means to accomplish or enforce them. A minority of states have strict land use restrictions along scenic byways, creating mixed receptions. In the western states, routes that go through public lands often regulate themselves because there is very little obtrusive activity allowed on these lands. States that provide incentive for local governments to enact land use preservation strategies had a greater success than those offering no incentives. There is very little a state can do to enforce land use restrictions outside the highway right-of-way without support and enforcement of local government. Corridor management plans that include land use preservation plans are essential if such restrictions are to be effective. However, this effort requires major coordination and promotion between the byways agency, local governments, private businesses, local interest groups, and citizens.

As of 1992, the following implementation tools were in use:

<u>Tool</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>States</u>
Public hearing to review any alterations of byway	4	AR, RI, UT, WA

Environmental review of impacts to scenic byways required for proposed state and local projects	6	AZ, AR, CA, ID, OR, RI
Billboard ban on scenic byway	8	AR, CA, CT, GA, OR, SC, UT, WA
Local government management	6	AZ, CA, NC, NY, OR, WA
Plans or other methods of protection		
Zoning overlay	3	AZ, CA, WA
Land use restrictions	3	CA, GA, WA
Scenic easement	3	AZ, GA, WA
Development setbacks	3	CA, GA, WA
Restriction of adjacent zoning and dev. type	3	CA, GA, WA
Landscape protection	3	AZ, CA, GA
Other methods of scenic protection	11	ID, AR, CA, CT, GA, NY, OR, RI, SC, VT, WA

17. *What liability cases have resulted from designation of scenic byways?*

No states have reported any known liability cases directly related to the designation of scenic byways.

18. *What programmatic efforts are made to work with other agencies and programs to ensure an accurate message regarding the definition of a scenic byway?*

Working with other agencies is a key to a successful effort and coordinated program. United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, State Historic Preservation Office, Department of Commerce (Travel Montana), and local governments are all potential partners. However, if the coordination effort is one of facility coordination (i.e. cooperative effort between State Trail System and Scenic Byways Program) then funding becomes a much greater issue. These issues will be discussed in detail under Chapter 5.

19. *What is the shortest and longest byway in your system?*

Full range:     Shortest -- 1.8 miles  
                     Longest -- 235 miles  
                     Average -- 55

20. *Since the 1990 survey, what is the annual cost of maintaining your Byways Program?*

Typical costs were under \$100,000, and in most cases significantly under. Many states had no breakdown of annual costs because the Byways Program wasn't a separate line item in the budget. Most management personnel had multiple duties -- of which byways was just one. Most maintenance efforts were incorporated into district level responsibilities. The

required responsibilities fit into normal maintenance schedules because, after signing, most of the routes had no special maintenance requirements.

21. *What is the estimated person-hour utilization at the management, technical, and district levels?*

See previous response.

22. *What impact does route designation have on traffic volume and vehicle type usage?*

Only one of the states interviewed had actual figures on usage statistics. Those states who actively promoted their system did report an apparent increase in usage. Utah, for example, offered before and after figures between 1989 and 1991/92. These figures showed a definite increase in use after designation. However, no other states interviewed could establish a link between designation and an increase in usage.

No information was available on vehicle type changes. Some of the smaller backways would not have exhibited an increase because there is a limit to the type of vehicle that can travel these routes.

23. *Does your Byways Program restrict heavy and/or long vehicles?*

Most of the byways had no special restrictions associated with designation. Byways restrictions often corresponded with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) restrictions. Any restrictions associated with the Byways Program would most likely be implemented at the local or county level, with close coordination at the state level.

24. *Is there a measurable difference in accident rates attributable to designation?*

No states interviewed had information on accident rates associated with byways designation.

25. *What is the greatest cause of safety concerns (accidents) on byways?*

Some travelers unfamiliar with the rugged terrain or designated routes, where changes in elevation and climatic conditions make driving conditions hazardous, became nervous, increasing the potential for accidents.

26. *Has there been an economic benefit attributable to the designation of byways?*

Very few states have conducted studies directed at determining the economic benefits of designation. Those that have, identified promotional efforts as having the most beneficial impact to local communities. This corresponds to the defined impact that aggressive promotional efforts have on the utilization of designated routes.

Local communities claim a definite economic benefit directly related to designation. Many local communities go through the effort of applying for designation simply for the potential economic benefits. In some cases the incentive is great enough to encourage land use preservation techniques and enforcement.

27. *What logo did your state adopt as the official byways logo?*

Each state had its own logo. No coordinated effort between states exist. Some states adopted parts of the national logo (American Recreation Coalition -- ARC), but developed their own independently.

28. *What future direction is foreseen for the program?*

The overriding future plans include the development of corridor management plans. Many states have designated routes, but have not established individual management plans. Some states are revising their entire program, while others are happy with the existing situation, and are changing nothing.

Promotional efforts are increasing with the development of guide books and maps.

29. *What constraints, if any, have scenic byway designations put on your ability to improve or upgrade highway improvements?*

No states reported specific constraints as a result of designation. However, each state indicated that special interest groups, intent on limiting highway development, have attempted to use their respective byways program to place such constraints. None have been successful to date.

30. *Have traffic increases due to scenic byway designation caused premature roadway deterioration with resulting increases in maintenance costs?*

No premature deterioration or increase in maintenance costs were reported by any state. Utah, one of the few states with a recorded increase due to designation, did not recognize any increased deterioration or maintenance costs. However, all admitted that they do not have adequate baseline data for such an analysis.

In addition to the profile generated from the interviews with each state, a full literature review was conducted on the individual state case studies that were prepared as part of the 1990 Scenic Byways Study. These studies added additional insight into the planning and implementation phases of scenic byways programs.

The information gathered during the interview and literature review process was used to prepare the initial analysis and identify program ramifications. The analysis considered potential problem areas, public acceptance issues, Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) responsibilities regarding sign regulations, and land use preservation plans. It identified the potential impacts on socioeconomic, highway safety, long-term maintenance, planning, construction, fiscal, and transportation requirements.

The results of the preliminary analysis was presented to the Advisory Committee for discussion (Appendix A) and provided direction throughout the remainder of this study. It helped the project team focus the planning effort toward a program best suited for Montana, its visitors and citizens, and the Department of Transportation. An in depth analysis was conducted in later chapters after the program goals, criteria, and alternatives were identified.

## CURRENT SETTING

### Existing Byways

Montana currently has no formal scenic byways program. However, there is one state scenic route, the Pintler, which is a sixty mile stretch of State Route 1 that was approved by the Highway Commission in 1977 as a five-year pilot project. Signing was the only feature that formally distinguished the route as scenic. These signs were left in place after the five-year study was complete, and remain today.

The U.S. Forest Service has five designated scenic byways and the Bureau of Land Management has three designated Back Country Byways in Montana. Other routes in Montana with special designation and/or signing include the Lewis and Clark Highway, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Heritage Route, Veterans Memorial Highway, Charles M. Russell Trail, Lewis and Clark Trail, Old West Trail, AAA Scenic Byways, and the Proposed Trail of the Great Bear.

### State and Federal Highway Systems

Prior to the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991, most federal highway funds were allocated to four designated systems. These were the Federal-Aid Interstate, Primary, Secondary and Urban Systems. ISTEA replaced these systems with a National Highway System, or NHS, which includes all Interstate routes and other selected routes, and the Surface Transportation Program, or STP, which essentially covers everything else.

Besides Interstate routes, the NHS includes other selected routes functionally classified as principal arterials. Functional classification refers to the official classification of all roads and streets based on the nature of service provided. For example, principal arterials serve major interstate or regional transportation needs, while locals serve neighborhood or local needs. ISTEA required each state to re-examine the functional class of all public roads prior to the official designation of the NHS. Montana completed this effort in 1993 and has submitted a proposed NHS for Montana that includes many former Federal-Aid Primary routes. Congress is expected to act on the NHS later this year.

ISTEA limited the use of STP funds to routes with a functional classification of major collector or above. At the state level, however, the Montana Legislature chose to further limit the use of these funds to state-designated Primary, Secondary and Urban Systems that include many routes that were on the old Federal-Aid systems. These routes are designated by the Montana Highway Commission in cooperation with local officials.

Maintenance responsibilities vary by system, and in many cases by route. MDT maintains all interstate routes and most other NHS and primary routes. However, most secondary and urban routes are city or county maintained.

### Land Use Controls and other Protective measures

Montana has no enabling legislation that provides for the protection of land use at the State level. Generally, Montana is typical of western states where the historic philosophy has been one of rugged individualism. In this context, minimal land use controls have been implemented. However, recent changes, including increased tourism and population, with associated land development pressures, have led some of these areas to adopt forms of land use control and

protection measures. Presently in Montana, 36 out of 56 counties have completed comprehensive plans; all 128 municipalities and 56 counties have subdivision regulations; 21 municipalities have zoning; and no counties have jurisdiction-wide zoning -- although 6 counties have intermittent citizen-initiated zoning districts (Design Workshop, 1992). There is currently a major citizen based planning effort underway in Flathead County where a performance based permit system is being recommended to control development. Consideration is also being given to developing a scenic overlay district to protect certain scenic roads.

Land use controls and other protective measures may be essential when considering the eligibility of a route for scenic byway status, or, these controls may follow designation of a scenic byway in order to maintain and protect the critical resources. Only the states of California, Connecticut, and Oregon consider existing land use controls and other protective measures to be criteria for scenic byway designation. Other states either have, or are interested in developing, some form of protection for their scenic byways. Appendix C describes a variety of resource protection techniques available for consideration at a later point in the scenic byways program investigation.

## PROGRAM RAMIFICATIONS

This preliminary analysis is based solely on the research that has been conducted to date. A comparative review was conducted that resulted in a general profile of state scenic byways programs. From this profile the project team was able to prepare general conclusions and recommendations for further development of the Montana Scenic Byways Program. The results of this analysis are discussed below.

### Public Acceptance

*Scenic Byways Program* -- MDT can expect that the general response to the development of a scenic byways program will be positive in nature. The in-state and out-of-state travel climate is prime for development of the Program. Spurred by an improving domestic economy and an aggressive promotional program through Travel Montana (MT Department of Commerce), Montana's travel statistics are reaching record levels. Trend projections show no indication of a reversal, and the State's tourism boom is expected to continue through the mid-1990's.

Most Montanans recognize tourism as a leading industry in the State and react positively to programs and policies that promote and encourage the enjoyment of its recreational, historic, scenic, and economic environments. The Scenic Byways Program would be considered by most to be a positive addition to the many attractions Montana has to offer.

*Designated routes and local restrictions* -- While general public acceptance will be positive on a statewide level, MDT can expect a range of public response relating to designation of specific routes. Defining the opposition will not be possible until the project team has had an opportunity to meet with the public and offer recommendations for Program structure. It is apparent however, that there is a direct correlation between public acceptance, and the level of bureaucratic involvement (especially at the State level) in the form of land use restrictions and controls applied along the scenic byway routes. Some states have successfully resolved the public acceptance issue, while others continue to struggle with opposition. In general, the solution appears to be one of limiting state sponsored designation and preservation procedures, and opting instead for a programmatic management and "behind the scenes" promotional role.

Without proper planning at the State level and promotion at the local level, individual route designations can expect to receive broad statewide support, while receiving less than average local support.

### Land Use Controls and Other Protective Measures

Controls or protective measures imposed at the State level, would not be as accepted as those developed, implemented, and supported at the local or grass-roots level. A successful protective program does improve the overall impression of usage, and return usage of scenic byways. A successfully implemented protective program can improve community confidence and attractiveness to outside interests.

It can be expected that various interest groups will attempt to use the byways program as a tool to limit development, outdoor advertising, and highway construction and/or improvement projects. However, unless the enabling legislation specifically provides for that opportunity, the efforts would not be successful.

### Socioeconomic

*Social* -- Development of a scenic byways program would result in an improved awareness of opportunities available for recreational travel in Montana. Travelers, who were previously unaware of the alternative scenic routes, could now enjoy an experience that otherwise would not have been realized.

Designation of scenic routes would attract more travelers and create a greater awareness of recreational opportunities across the State. In addition to the social benefit associated with travel on scenic byways, visitors would have greater exposure to recreational opportunities that are available along the route.

This improved awareness and the resulting increase in utilization would be in direct relation to the promotional efforts of any or all of the parties associated with the Scenic Byways Program. Brochures, guidebooks, signing, and advertising would effectively serve to promote Montana's system of scenic byways.

If the development of a scenic byways program were to result in moneys available for scenic/recreational improvements associated with the route itself, social opportunities would again be improved. For example, if designation of a scenic byway resulted in increased bicycle traffic along the route, the Department could elect to construct a bicycle path within the highway right-of-way, alleviating safety concerns, and providing an organized opportunity for social alternatives along the byway.

Designation under the Scenic Byways Program could result in negative impacts if an increased level of traffic or visitorship detracts from the recreational or scenic experience of another within a given area.

*Economic* -- Several factors influence the economic impacts associated with the development of a scenic byways program: 1) availability of funding; 2) level of promotional efforts; 3) tourism characteristics; 4) demographics; 5) services, products, and opportunities available along the route and at the termini; and 6) type of scenic byways designated.

Funding availability influences the economic situation at two levels. First, the availability of funds for administration of the Program directly impacts the number of person-hours available for management of the Program. Increased funding could provide additional employment within the Department. Secondly, additional funds could be applied to promotional efforts, route enhancement efforts, or system expansion. Each of these efforts has the potential to attract more visitors to areas along the designated routes, injecting more money into the local community.

Aggressive and well-funded promotional strategies typically result in an increased economic benefit to recreational attractions and local communities along the designated routes. Guidebooks, interpretive maps, signing, advertisements, and clips in state promotional features represent a number of methods for promoting scenic byways. In addition to production costs, the Department must provide funding for adequate distribution and reprint costs as new byways are added over time.

Tourism characteristics across Montana vary from region to region. Montana, having the fourth largest land mass in the nation, offers a wide variety of geographic, economic, scenic, recreational, historical, and educational opportunities. Statistics show that usage rates associated with tourism on Montana's highways coincide with regions offering the most opportunity for recreation, scenery, economic hubs, and educational centers. Coincidentally, western Montana is abundant in each of these areas, while the northern and eastern portions of the State offer less opportunity, but more unique experiences for recreation, sight-seeing, shopping and education. Comparatively, economic benefits to attractions and communities along designated routes in these less traveled areas would be less than the more heavily traveled corridors.

Similarly, with Montana's population centers being concentrated in the central and western portions of the State, realized economic benefit along scenic byways in these regions will be above average -- while benefits within the State's less populated areas will be less. However, with an aggressive promotional and educational program that emphasizes the unique opportunities found in these areas, they could experience an increase in the benefit over time.

In general, economic benefit can be realized by the designation of a route. To do so takes local support, broad-based promotional strategies, alternative funding programs, cooperative agreements between the Department, local, state and federal agencies, the private sector, and individuals. This investigation is intended to identify a process that can accomplish these goals as efficiently and effectively as possible.

### Highway Safety

Impacts to traveler safety on designated routes cannot be successfully evaluated because none of the states interviewed for the general profile had records available regarding changes in accident rates. However, potential impacts can be identified based on the assumption that designation will result in increased numbers of sight-seeing type traffic on designated routes. With this increase could come slower traffic, larger RV-type vehicles, and travelers unfamiliar with these segments of highway. The combination could be potentially hazardous.

Potential hazards exist with designation of routes that are used heavily by over-the-road truck traffic. The combination of increased numbers, slower pace of recreational traffic, and larger RV's, combined with truck travel, could create unsafe travel conditions on some of the more rural, winding routes -- especially those with steep grades and narrow shoulders.

### Legal/Liability

The scenic byways enabling legislation would provide the legal framework from which decisions would be made regarding individual routes for designation or dedesignation. As with any legislation, the Byways Program would always be susceptible to legal challenges. However, it is difficult to define potential liability cases since no states interviewed for the general profile had experienced any such challenges.

### Short and Long-Term Maintenance

Maintenance requirements on scenic byways would vary, depending on the level of physical attributes added to the route under the Byways Program. If the physical attributes consisted solely of signing, increased maintenance would be a short term requirement because installation of the signs would occur upon designation. Little additional maintenance, other than sign replacement and repair, would be required following installation.

If the physical attributes consisted of larger developments (i.e. pulloffs, informational kiosks, bike paths, passing lanes, etc.) the maintenance responsibilities would be more extensive in the short and long terms. Short term maintenance responsibilities would be construction related. Long term maintenance responsibilities would be those associated with sign replacement and repair, snow clearing, pavement repair, stripe and sign painting, and structural repair.

Increased maintenance responsibilities and associated costs resulting from a potential increase in highway usage is highly unlikely on Interstate and Primary routes. Pavement integrity could be a problem on routes that are at or above their carrying capacity. Designation of such routes could increase average daily traffic (ADT), resulting in premature deterioration of the highway. Such routes would be identified prior to designation.

### Short and Long-Term Administration

Administrative requirements would also depend on the extent (i.e. number of routes, etc.) of the Byways Program and the level of government at which the program and its components would be implemented. In the short term, administrative requirements would be high because review of applications, public meetings, inventories, designation procedures, modification of guides, and establishment of physical attributes would require significant attention by the Department.

Long term administrative requirements would be slightly reduced once the route was effectively designated and physical attributes completed. Annual duties such as program promotion, route inventories and program reviews would utilize short blocks of time, but over the course of a year would not equate to substantial utilization.

The short and long-term administrative ramifications would be significantly different depending on the level of departmental involvement. If the Program was based on a top-down management strategy, meaning that the Department would conduct nomination, review, designation, preservation, and promotional procedures internally, the administrative ramifications could be quite high. Not only would this level of involvement require more program-wide and route-specific administrative management, it could also require more time in the public relations sector.

If the Program was based on a bottom-up management strategy, and the Department served primarily as a decision making and oversight body, the administrative ramifications would be significantly less. Nominations, applications, preservation, and promotion would be initiated at the

local level, thus requiring less micro-management and allowing efforts to be spent on application review, decision making, and overall management of the program.

### Short and Long-Term Funding

Funding requirements would vary depending on the extent of the Program (i.e. number of routes, etc.) and level of physical modifications associated with designation (i.e. pullouts, kiosks, bike paths, etc.). Initially, funding requirements would be above average as review of applications, public meetings, route inventories, designation proceedings, guide development, and physical modifications began.

Long term funding requirements would be less once the initial routes were designated under the new program. Funding would then be limited to yearly maintenance of signs and physical structures, occasional application and designation proceedings, guide updates, and program promotion.

Specific short and long term funding requirements are difficult to define at this point and will vary depending on the level of Departmental involvement. As with the administrative responsibilities, if the Program was based on a top-down management strategy, funding requirements would be higher and there would be less opportunity for cost sharing programs with local communities, private parties, etc.

However, if the Program was managed from a bottom-up standpoint, the Department's funding obligations would be less because many of the activities would be initiated at the local or grass-roots level -- including funding and physical modification. Under this scenario, the Department would provide management direction and Program oversight as well as review of applications and decision making duties, but would be less responsible for funding individual route components.

## CONCLUSIONS AND PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

If the Scenic Byways Program is established in Montana, every effort should be made to gather as much baseline as possible (i.e. current and past accident rates, usage, vehicle types, etc.). This recommendation is made in support of the opportunity for Montana to provide the nation's first real evaluation of the impacts from designation. So far, no state has really conducted a before and after comparison.

A bottom-up approach seems to be the most logical, and ultimately, the most successful means for implementing a byways program that includes preservation measures. Development of an internal function within the Department that will foster the designation and preservation process without direct involvement, will provide for a system of scenic byways requiring minimal physical and fiscal commitments by the Department. No state interviewed had a specific strategy for fostering action at the local level, but many utilized a public awareness approach that included dissemination of information and support services to local governments for initiating and maintaining a local byways program. Matching National Scenic Byways Program grants for local efforts may be one approach for creating incentive at the local level. This, combined with a fairly aggressive campaign by the Department through presentations to commissions, business organizations (Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis, Lions, etc.), town councils, chambers, etc., should be considered by Montana.

Because Montana has so many unimproved/gravel/county scenic routes, we may want to consider a system similar to Utah's and/or Wisconsin's. A two-tiered system would be particularly fitting for two primary reasons:

- 1) It would provide an opportunity for a less formal program, with little or no financial burden on the Department other than signing and promotion. Backways would basically be left as is, with little or no controls. This works because there is rarely any "non-conforming" type of development (billboards, junkyards, etc.) along these routes that does not contribute to the nature of the area (i.e. old farmsteads, fencing, etc.). Backways would serve as a type of model for eventual byways in a region. They also provide access to a number of Montana's less known recreational opportunities such as trails, lakes, rivers, and ghost towns. Backways, meanwhile, could bring economic benefits to some of Montana's smallest communities. Because of this potential for economic benefit, smaller communities may choose to take more active roles in establishing byways in their region. This option may allow for some of the stigma and concern over byways to be eased -- possibly making it less prohibitive to establish a byway in the region.
- 2) A two tiered system would allow the Department to place less emphasis on establishing a quantity based byways program on Montana's highway system, and focus more on a quality based system with fewer designated routes, with more funding and manpower for signing, maintaining, and improving those routes. The combination of backways and byways would be complimentary, for they would be mutually supportive -- that is, they would all be part of the program and mutually accessible.

Preliminary funding alternatives include: 1) National Scenic Byways Program grants/enhancement funds; 2) State travel promotion (Travel Montana) for preparation of guide; 3) private support for local initiatives; 4) joint agency funding (FS, BLM, DSL, etc.); 5) sales of promotional materials; 6) industry or corporate sponsorship (timber, mining, etc.); and 7) internal.

One money-saving idea is to conduct a survey of existing pullouts, rest areas, etc. that are along scenic byways and improve them rather than construct new, more costly ones. For example,

existing rest areas or chain-up areas could be improved to include an interpretative or informational kiosk. Routes with wide shoulders could be improved to include a bike path on the shoulder, with areas for vehicle pullouts. Finally, MDT should develop an internal policy to build scenic byways considerations into the Department's long-term planning process -- especially during the design phase -- for route improvements on currently or potentially (nominated) designated byways.

Local committees or task forces on each designated byway can be a useful source for saving administrative costs to the Department. The task force would be given the responsibility to oversee their specific byway, propose changes, monitor criteria, encourage promotional efforts and local support, maintain signs, and prepare an annual report for the Department. By doing this, the local community can take pride in something that they have a certain amount of control over and which directly impacts their community.

The Byways Program should not be limited to scenic, recreational, or historic objectives. Successful programs seem to incorporate all three as a means to reach each region of the State and provide opportunity for a variety of highway users. Color codes or descriptive guides can easily inform the traveler of each route's emphasis.

## CHAPTER 3

### ACCOMMODATING INCREASED TOURISM

#### TASK DESCRIPTION

Chapter 3 was designed to be the final step toward establishing byways designation criteria, program alternatives, protection measures, and the framework for corridor management plans (chapters 4-6). Information from chapters 1 and 2 was used to assess the Department's existing in-house ability to manage a scenic byways program. Alternative sources of funding for scenic byways were considered, along with a range of design options for highways and facilities associated with scenic byways. A byways classification strategy was introduced for consideration in chapters 4-6. The team then assessed the needs of travelers, and prepared a preliminary estimate of highway usage increases based on varying levels of promotion and the result of the multi-state survey conducted in earlier tasks. An existing level-of-service analysis was conducted on the State's Primary routes. A general trend projection was then prepared to identify the percentage of these routes expected to exceed their intended level of service as defined by the Department. Finally, the team coordinated closely with other agencies and states to identify the range of signing programs currently in use on existing byways across the country.

A meeting was facilitated to identify the scope, role and objectives of the conceptual scenic byways program. The meeting was attended by Department administrators, planners, engineers, and maintenance personnel. It was professionally facilitated for consensus.

#### TASK RESULTS

##### Extent to Which MDT Can Manage a Scenic Byways Program

A realistic way of defining the level of program manageable by MDT was to evaluate the ease with which a conceptual program could assimilate into the Department's existing personnel and funding strategy. The evaluation focused on two aspects of a conceptual program: 1) the planning and management of a byways program and 2) the improvement and construction of byways facilities.

*Planning and Management* -- Consultation with Department representatives identified no additional funding for personnel, planning, and/or management of a scenic byways program under the existing budget. It is also unlikely that future fiscal budgets will include moneys for program planning and management -- including additional full-time employees (FTE's). Funding through the National Scenic Byways Program grants will not be available for further planning and management efforts after this byways investigation is complete.

Although no additional funding will be available for program planning and management, the Department has estimated a reasonable commitment of one FTE from within the existing planning staff. One FTE is a realistic and reasonable expectation based on the practical experience of other states' programs. The duties for the FTE would likely be dispersed between the existing planning staff. This arrangement would allow each planner to continue serving in their respective areas of responsibility -- thus avoiding additional training needs for the planners (i.e. individual planning staff taking over the responsibilities of co-workers).

Two other options are available for achieving the equivalent of one FTE, but each depends on a demonstrated need and the availability of additional funding. First, existing FTE's that are currently vacant could be reclassified to meet the job description of the Scenic Byways Planner.

Second, a new FTE could be created for the position. Both options require extensive coordination with Department officials, the Department of Administration, and for the latter, approval by the Legislature.

Other funding sources, as discussed in the following section, could provide opportunities for enhanced program planning and management capabilities. Statewide Planning Research funds (SPR) are eligible for use in planning activities, but not construction or improvement. SPR funds (2% of the total federal allocation to the State) are generally committed and unavailable for new programs. As a general rule, federal and state funding allocations are difficult to tap for support of new programs. Therefore, additional funding for planning and management of a scenic byways program would be limited -- unless generated from private sources, special grant, and/or government incentive programs. These options are viable, but will not be considered in detail in this investigation. Sources of alternative funding are discussed below and could be considered if a program is adopted.

*Construction and Improvements* -- If a scenic byways program was to include recommendations for construction and improvements to select highways and/or facilities, little to none of the Department's allocated funding would be available -- unless the proposed activity/schedule could be assimilated into an existing construction and/or improvement plan.

This being the case, funding for construction and improvement projects under a scenic byways program would have to come from other sources, such as local financial support, grants, grants with matching funds (i.e. National Scenic Byway Program grants), coordination with federal land management agency programs, other state agency funds (i.e. special grant programs, etc.) and/or public/private partnerships.

In summary, the Department cannot provide additional funding or personnel to plan and manage a scenic byways program. Existing resources, up to an equivalent of one FTE, could be made available for planning and management of the Program. This level of support could provide efficient management and planning efforts in Helena, but could fall short of providing any additional resources necessary at the district level to maintain signs and other facilities along a designated route.

Similarly, no allocated funds would be available for construction and/or improvement plans under the Program. Such funds would have to be acquired from other sources and coordinated through the Transportation Planning Division.

The funding situation presented here is very similar to that being faced by a majority of the other states with scenic byways programs. However, most of these states have reported that one FTE has been sufficient to plan and manage their program. They also report that the highway and facility improvements, once funded through grants and special sources, require very little additional maintenance from the district offices -- and therefore little extra funding.

Most states also feel that a successful program must have the financial and personal support of the local community and its individuals. In states where the transportation department served as a low-key program manager -- offering guidance, oversight and promotional support -- the individual byways were sufficiently funded, maintained, and preserved.

The information presented here will be used in Chapter 5 to help identify the level of scenic byways program best suited for the State of Montana.

## Funding Alternatives

**Federal Transportation Funding** -- Federal funds are allocated to five transportation components within the Montana Department of Transportation. Allocation of these funds is through ISTEA's newly designated federal model that uses either specific distribution formulas or percent guarantees. The five components include (figure 3.1): 1) Bridge; 2) Interstate Maintenance; 3) National Highway System (NHS); 4) Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ); and 5) the Surface Transportation Program (STP).

Any federal funding opportunities for a scenic byways program would probably come from STP. In particular, construction and/or improvement could be indirectly funded with transportation enhancement funds which represent 10% of STP's allocation (see figure 3.1). Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) funding is available to city and county level government for such enhancement purposes as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, scenic easements, historic preservation, control and removal of outdoor advertising, and mitigating water pollution. Scenic or historic highway projects are also eligible for CTEP funding. In addition to CTEP, some funds are available for Department use for enhancement eligible projects.

Other indirect funding would be through ISTEA's National Scenic Byways Program. This funding alternative would be limited to construction and improvement type activities. It is discussed in greater detail under the grant section below. Other federally allocated funds would be unavailable for support of a scenic byways program.

**State/Federal Funding** -- This investigation considers two state funding sources -- MDT and other state agencies. Funding availability under MDT's fiscal allocation has been discussed in the previous section and is presented here in summary. There is little to no state allocated funding available for planning, management, construction and/or improvements projects under a scenic byways program. Planning and management of a program would be conducted within the existing planning staff and would require the equivalent of one FTE. Construction and improvement funds would have to come from other sources. However, the FTE for byways management could play an integral part in identifying and soliciting these alternative funding sources.

A variety of funding could be available from other state agencies such as the Departments of Commerce (Travel Montana), Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Natural Resources & Conservation, Agriculture, and State Lands. It would be the responsibility of the Scenic Byways Planner to research the funds available from these agencies on a yearly basis to determine eligibility of the Program for participation in the respective opportunities. The planner would also play an integral role in the coordination of these efforts and the preparation of the necessary applications and/or memorandums of understanding.

**Local Funding** -- The availability of local funding for support of a specific scenic byway is difficult to distinguish. CTEP funds, as identified above, could be used at the city and county level to fund construction or improvement projects associated with a scenic byway. However, no local governments have utilized CTEP funds in such a manner. Other sources for local funding range from tax incentive programs to incubator programs which are often used to generate localized economic hubs. MDT's Scenic Byways Planner would coordinate closely with local officials and the scenic byways proponent in that area to investigate, identify, and pursue ways to incorporate local funding into the scenic byways project.

## Montana's Interpretation of New Federal Model

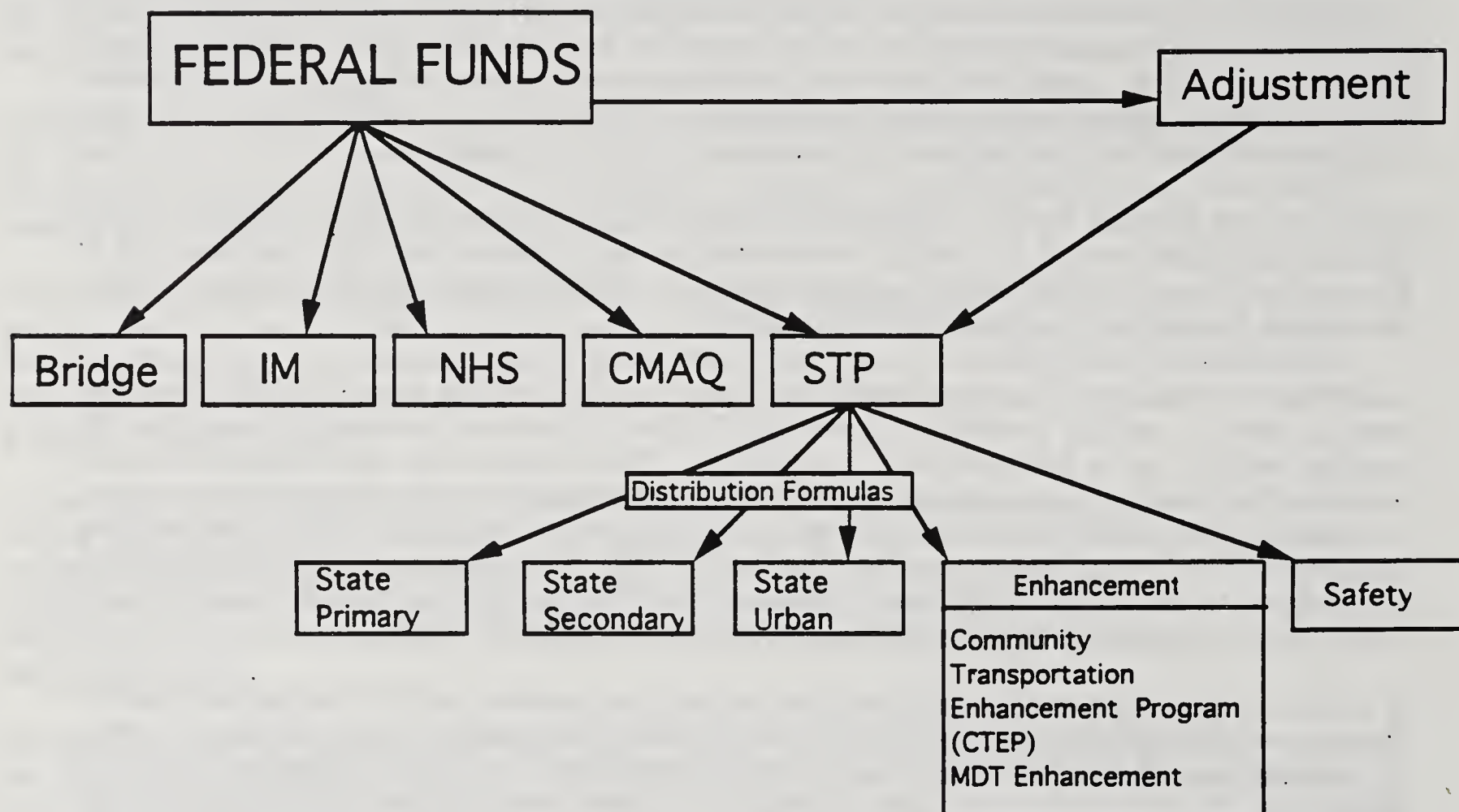


Figure 3.1 ISTE A Federal Model

**Statewide Planning and Research Funds** -- Statewide Planning and Research funds (SPR) are eligible for use in planning activities, but not construction or improvement. SPR funds (2% of the total federal allocation to the State) are generally committed and unavailable for new programs. In the event an opportunity to utilize a portion of these funds arose, the Scenic Byways Planner would work with the Department to pursue funding for the specific planning and/or research project(s).

*Grants* -- There are many grant programs at the local, state, and federal levels that could be used to fund various aspects of scenic byway projects. The most well-known grant opportunity is National Scenic Byways Program. Section 1047(f) of ISTEA establishes an Interim Scenic Byways Program to make grants to any state that has a scenic byways program for carrying out eligible projects on designated scenic byways. This interim provision is effective in fiscal years 1992 through 1994. 80% of the costs for carrying out projects and program planning is federal share. In addition to the interim program, ISTEA includes provisions for the Program to provide grant funding for fiscal years 1995 through 1997, with the federal cost share remaining at 80%.

Funding for this investigation and any subsequent planning effort is the result of an Interim Scenic Byways Program grant. If a scenic byways program was developed, further grant moneys would be available under the National Scenic Byways Program -- but only for construction and/or improvement related projects on designated scenic byways. After fiscal year '95, the National Scenic Byways Program grants will be limited to routes designated as National Scenic Byways, All-American Roads, or to those working toward designation.

MDT's Scenic Byways Planner would be responsible for coordinating National Scenic Byways Program grant applications and assisting in local efforts toward acquiring other grant funding.

*Match Funding* -- Most of the funding sources identified above would have a "match" component that requires some ratio of matching funds to those distributed under the respective program. Match funding can be required between any level of the public/private funding process. National Scenic Byways Program grants, for example, require an 80%-20% split between the National Scenic Byways Program and the state respectively. MDT's Scenic Byways Planner would assist the applicants in identifying the source and availability of matching funds.

*Private Funds* -- A rare option -- but one that is receiving more attention nationwide -- is that of private funding, including: 1) individual and corporate/organization donations; 2) public-private partnerships; and 3) privately sponsored fund raising events.

Individual and corporate/organization donations are typically limited to two categories. 1) Cash donations are most often used by the local Scenic Byways Committee or other representative support group for use on improvements to facilities, signs, or application procedures on local byways. 2) The donation of physical resources or byways facilities (picnic table, informational kiosk, bike path, etc.) is becoming more popular as individuals and corporations/organizations opt to see their funds dedicated to specific or predetermined uses. Typically, these types of donations and their use are agreed to in advance by the individual, corporation, or organization, local byways committee and the State. Once agreed, the local organization will place the donated item under the supervision of the Department.

Receipt of donations from private sources is one very successful means to achieve positive results for both the donating party and the local scenic byway. In many cases, the donation is a write-off for the donor and also provides a public relations opportunity for corporations or organizations with a specific interest in a region.

The cooperative effort that is required in coordinating private funding is the foundation for a successful byways program and beneficial local byways. Program managers across the United States have identified local support and initiative as the key factor in their program's success. Private donations often make the difference between mediocre and exceptional local byways.

Public-private partnerships are being used to successfully fund a number of scenic byways nationwide. Public-private partnerships are formalized through memorandums of understanding

and involve a more extensive coordination effort than the donation process discussed previously. These partnerships are typically entered into between the respective State's Department of Transportation and include significant support by the private and often the public entity.

The principle behind the partnership concept is that it promotes a more successful byways by acting as the mechanism that brings diverse entities together with a common goal. To ensure partnership success, the benefits must be mutual. For example, the San Juan Skyway in Colorado is a 236-mile scenic byway loop established by the U.S. Forest Service and later recognized by the State of Colorado as a Colorado Scenic and Historic Byway. The Skyway partnership includes the Forest Education Association, Plymouth Corporation, USFS, Holiday Rambler Recreational Vehicle Club, Inc., and Harley Davidson, Inc. Each partner has one goal in mind -- to preserve the recreational and scenic opportunity unique to that part of Colorado while sending a message to the American public. The Forest Service wants to interpret land management practices, volunteer organizations want to make known their respective activities, and the private corporations want to promote their products in an inspirational manner.

Most partnerships are organized as cost shares, but can include the shared use of human, physical, and/or political resources. For a partnership to be successful, the coordinating team must first establish a general profile of their potential partners. Once prepared, the team can solicit participation through presentations, personal contacts, and/or advertisements. Goals and objectives of the partnership can be established through the MOU process. Ensuring the momentum of any partnership requires a coordinated effort between all partners and the Scenic Byways Planner. With a successful byway and partnership in place, the major task is then to strengthen the partnership through direct incentives and to monitor the success of the specific partnership and byway.

An active coordinating effort at the local and state level can result in a very successful partnership program for individual byways or for the Program as a whole. MDT's Scenic Byways Planner would play an active role in supporting and cooperating with local and private parties interested in forming partnerships.

*Special Funds* -- One option for funding construction and/or improvements projects on scenic byways is through developing special funds unique to the specific activity proposed. Special funds can be set up at any level of government or through a specific interest group. Involvement can be solicited through advertisements, direct mailings, personal contacts, and roadside information programs.

Special funds typically target individual byway improvement or construction projects such as information kiosks, bike paths, and/or signing. Special funds, such as California's Special Interest Stopping Place Fund, provide an opportunity for travelers and local interest groups to donate money that will be used to establish special amenities along the route.

Special funds could be established once a scenic byway is designated. Coordination with MDT would be required to determine the feasibility and cost of the proposed activity. Once established, the Scenic Byways Planner would work with the funds' proponent to coordinate timeframes, management, and oversight efforts. Once again, a grass-roots effort is often the most successful in developing special funds.

In summary, there are a variety of funding alternatives available for consideration by private and public entities. Resourcefulness and persistence at each level of interest can result in funds that support a range of projects -- from the addition of one sign to the development of full interpretative

facilities and/or bike paths along a portion of scenic byway. Continuing traditional highway funding needs will limit the availability of construction funds for enhancements related to the Scenic Byways Program.

### Highway and Facility Design Options

The range of scenic byways -- from Interstate to unimproved roads -- is as great as the vast distance that separates the following illustrations.



Figure 3.2: Diverse Road Types

Source: National Scenic Byways Study

A scenic byway typically gives the traveler glimpses of nature, history, geology, landscaping, and cultural activities along the road. Campgrounds, picnic areas, or other recreational sites may exist within the scenic corridor, or the road may provide a pleasant access to such facilities.

Thus, the location and surrounds of the road are the key factors which make it eligible as a scenic byway. The actual type of road may vary based on specific criteria and concerns of the authorizing agency. While the majority of scenic byways across the nation are paved two lane roads, certain Interstates or one lane gravel roads may also be designated as scenic byways. Some states, Utah for example, actually separate their scenic road program into two categories to accommodate the different levels of development.

This analysis will focus on design options specifically in relation to scenic routes. First, it addresses *Road Design* factors which are key to successfully integrating a road into its environment. Second, *Road Engineering* factors including safety, operation, and maintenance are addressed. Third, a matrix and illustrations describe the range of *Road Types* and *Associated Facilities* that are available. The above three categories are then discussed in relation to minimum standards for design elements and auxiliary features and scenic byways unit costs.

### Road Design Factors

Table 3.1 shows road characteristics and elements in relation to important overall aspects of scenic routes. It is important to use a total planning concept (e.g. as applied by the Forest Service in designating and maintaining a scenic byway). The ideas presented in the following section and Appendix D are not intended to establish precedent for new design standards for scenic byways. They only represent options for enhancing byways if additional funding is available.

Elements	General Objectives	Characteristics
NATIONAL DESIGNATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance general awareness of scenic highways, cultural, and historic places, etc.</li> <li>• Improve quality of scenic highway experience</li> <li>• Close information gap on available experiences and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs and markers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Routes</li> <li>— Directional</li> <li>— Complementary facilities</li> <li>— Information displays</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Maps and brochures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— National maps</li> <li>— State maps</li> <li>— Route maps and brochures</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Media actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Information centers</li> <li>— Publicity and advertising</li> <li>— User aids</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
CORRIDOR PROTECTION AND SCENIC ENHANCEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve highly scenic corridors</li> <li>• Enhance scenic quality of corridors</li> <li>• Protect ecology and land forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenic enhancement and preservation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Easements</li> <li>— Landscaping—trees and shrubs planted, trees removed</li> <li>— Billboard control</li> <li>— Junkyard screening and removal</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Corridor protection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Restraints—access control</li> <li>— Ecological stabilization—use of shrubs and other plants, drainage</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
COMPLEMENTARY FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote multiple use of scenic corridors for recreation</li> <li>• Enhance quality of recreation experience</li> <li>• Increase availability and types of complementary facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenic highway support facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Scenic overlooks</li> <li>— Rest stops</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Recreation facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Picnic areas</li> <li>— Water recreation facilities</li> <li>— Cultural/historic sites</li> <li>— Walkways/bikeways</li> <li>— Campgrounds</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
URBAN EMPHASIS AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve quality of urban recreation and scenic highway experiences</li> <li>• Fulfill greater percentage of urban recreation needs within urban boundaries</li> <li>• Conserve energy without reducing urban service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Designation of incremental urban miles</li> <li>— Additional lanes</li> <li>— Operation of scenic bus service</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Energy efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Bus lanes</li> <li>— Increase in vehicle occupancy</li> <li>— Bikeways</li> <li>— Closer-in complementary facilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
NATIONAL CONNECTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect more people to recreation areas</li> <li>• Provide scenic experience for non-recreation everyday driving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation connectivity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Additional lanes</li> <li>— Operation of buses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Urban and arterial connectivity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Additional lanes</li> <li>— Operation of buses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Source: *Assessment of the Feasibility of Developing a National Scenic Highway System*. Report to Congress: Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C., September 25, 1974.

Table 3.1 Road Characteristics and Elements

*The Environment* is key to establishing the character of a scenic route. Figure 3.3 illustrates the variety of environmental resources which contribute to the creation of a scenic byway. Sometimes, the type of environment influences the type of road. For example, a remote area with difficult terrain may be accessed with a small gravel road, while a rural area with rolling terrain connecting several urban centers, may have a four-lane highway. It is important to consider the appropriate road type in relation to its environment and to minimize disturbance of natural resources.

**WATER**  
Rivers, Lakes, Waterfalls,  
Rapids, Beaches, Marshes,  
Islands, Dams, Canals, Locks,  
Harbors, Lighthouses.



**TOPOGRAPHY**  
Mountains, Canyons,  
Geologic Formations,  
Golf Courses, and other  
Specialty Graded Sports  
Areas.



**FAUNA**  
Wildlife Areas, Hunting  
Preserves, Livestock  
Grazing Areas, Pastures.



**VEGETATION**  
Forest, Prairies,  
Orchards, Active Farm  
Croplands, Tree Farms.



**HISTORIC & CULTURAL**  
Forts, Battlefields, Old  
Mills, Covered Bridges,  
Mines, Ghost Towns,  
Plantations.



**RECREATION**  
Camp Grounds, Picnic Areas,  
Boating, Gold Panning,  
Rock Collecting Areas.



Source: A Proposed Program for Scenic Roads & Parkways, U.S. Department of Commerce for the President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty.

Figure 3.3 Elements of Scenic Byways

Source: Scenic Byways - USDOT

**Visual Resources** --One of the goals of a scenic byway is to create visual access to scenic and interesting sites. Therefore, it is critical to design and maintain the road to maximize visual resources.

*The User and Volume of Use* further dictate the size and shape of highways. However, when considering scenic byways designation, this should be balanced with potential environmental effects.

*Detailed Design Considerations* -- Road alignment is a key factor in successfully achieving the goal of scenic designation. Ditches and culverts appropriately designed, and successful grading and blending with the natural environment add to the overall byways concept. Suitably spaced road facilities such as pull-outs and rest areas provide comfort and a positive reassurance for travelers.

*Roadside development and structures* can have dramatic impacts on the road's scenic quality. The National Park Service has some historic roads which exemplify excellent use of materials and design for roadside development (figure 3.4). Items to consider include: signs, guard rails, rest areas, bridges, tunnels, walls, bicycle paths, and landscaping.



Figure 3.4 National Park Service Historic Road Detail -- Sequoia National Park

### Road Engineering

Many of the same elements are addressed as in road design, however emphasis is placed on safety, operations, and maintenance effects.

*Safety issues* include: speed, signs, clear zone, barriers, pedestrians, emergency vehicles, grades, curves, vehicle restrictions, structures, railroad crossings and liability.

*Operational issues* include: delay and congestion, parking, traffic control devices, enforcement and signs.

*Maintenance issues* include: potential road deterioration and maintenance of signs, markings and rest areas. Maintenance of traffic control devices is important from a liability aspect.

### Road Types and Associated Facilities

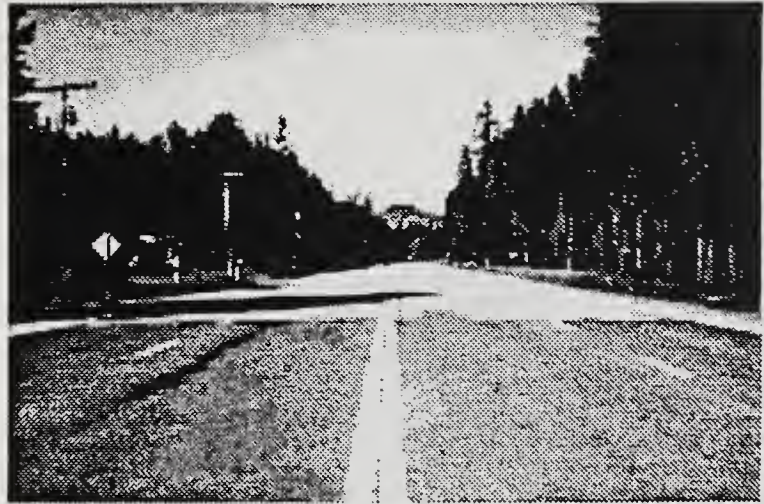
Table 3.2 and the following illustrations provide an overview of the range of road types and associated facilities available for consideration as scenic byways.

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

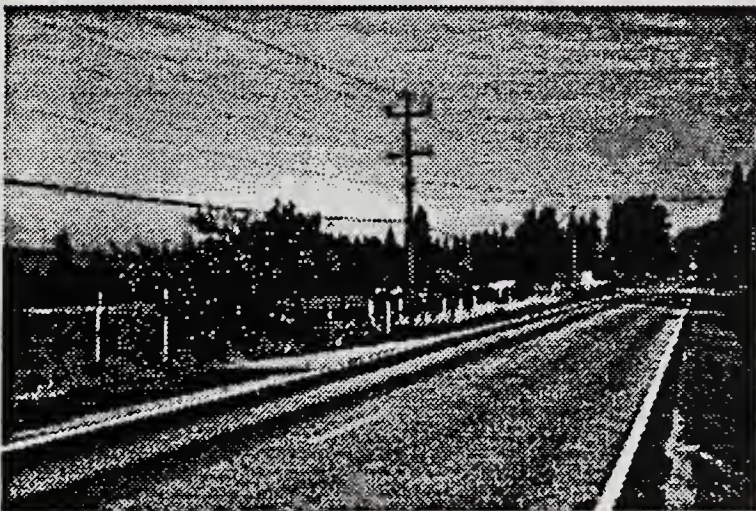
*Roadway Type*



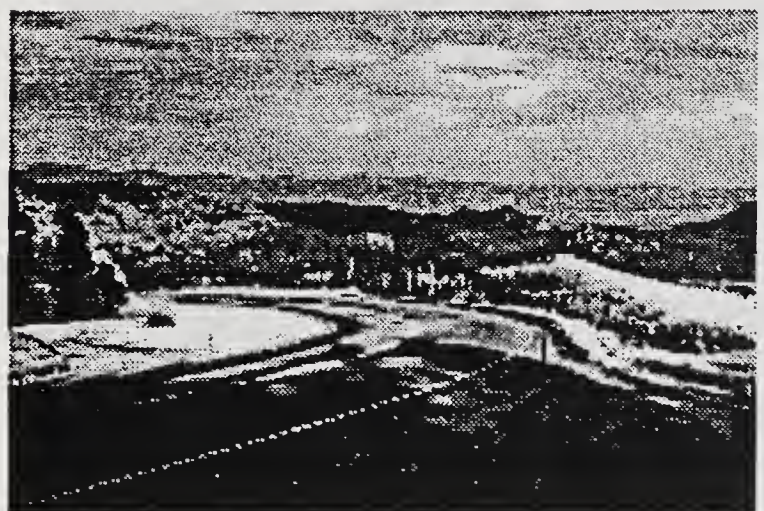
***Two Lane - Gravel Improved***  
*(Rustic and Backways)*



***Four Lane - Undivided***



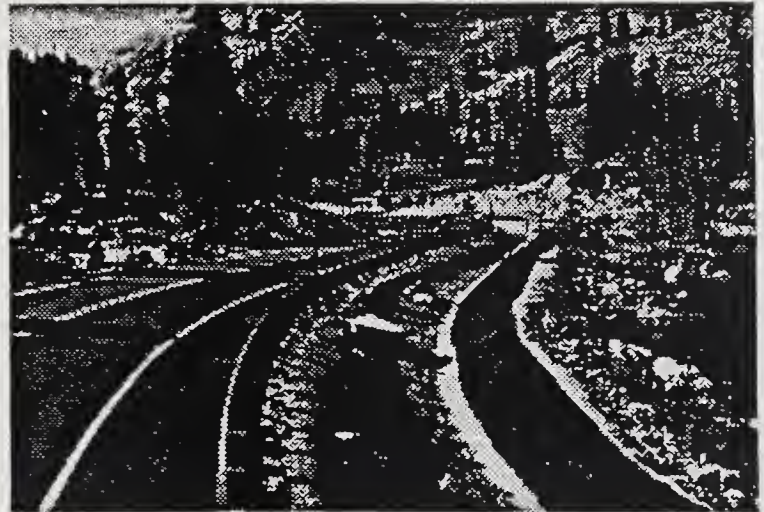
***Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders***



***Four Lane - Developed***



***Two Lane - Wide Shoulders***  
*Bike path in shoulders*



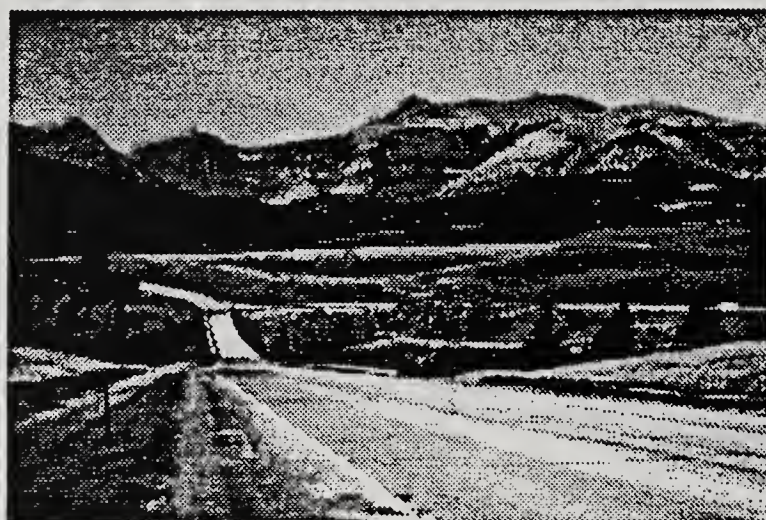
***Four Lane - Developed***  
*Snowy Range Road, Wyoming - Separated Bike Path*

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES  
*Road Design Features/Accessories*



**Two Lane - Gravel Improved**

*No improvements on cattle range - potentially dangerous*



**Four Lane - Undivided**

*Well aligned bridge crossing*



**Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders**

*Historic Structures eg. Sequoia National Park*



**Four Lane - Developed**

*State Route 73, Maryville, Tennessee passes through the community*



**Two Lane - Wide Shoulders**

*Barrier Design - Special Consideration should be given eg. replace concrete barriers with see-through guardrails*



**Four Lane - Developed**

*Intermodal Crossing*

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

*Road Edge/Landscape Treatment*



**Two Lane - Gravel Improved**  
*No shoulder - wild unmaintained edge  
appropriate in wilderness environmnet*



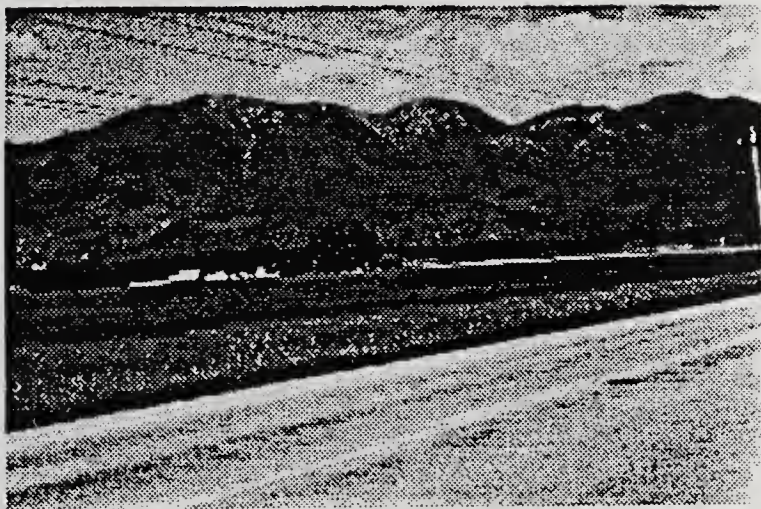
**Two Lane**  
*Road through Urban Area - Building Edge*



**Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders**  
*Natural appearing edge*



**Four Lane - Developed**  
*Road through Urban Area - signage edge could be improved  
Median provides landscaping opportunities*



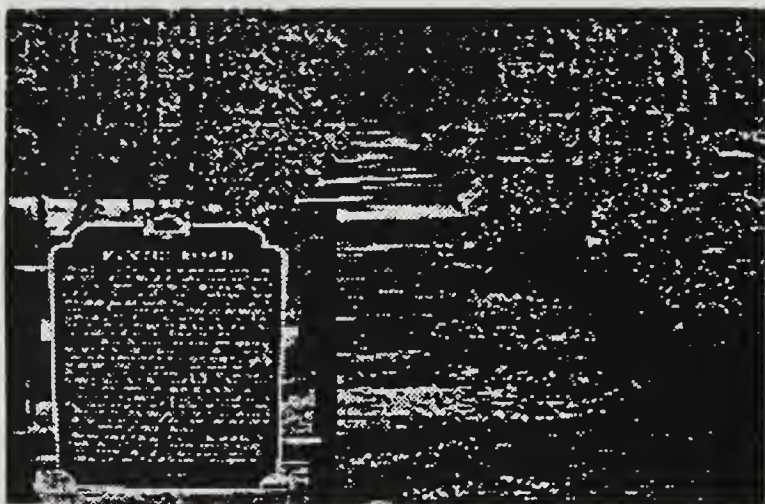
**Two Lane - Wide Shoulders**  
*Agricultural Edge*



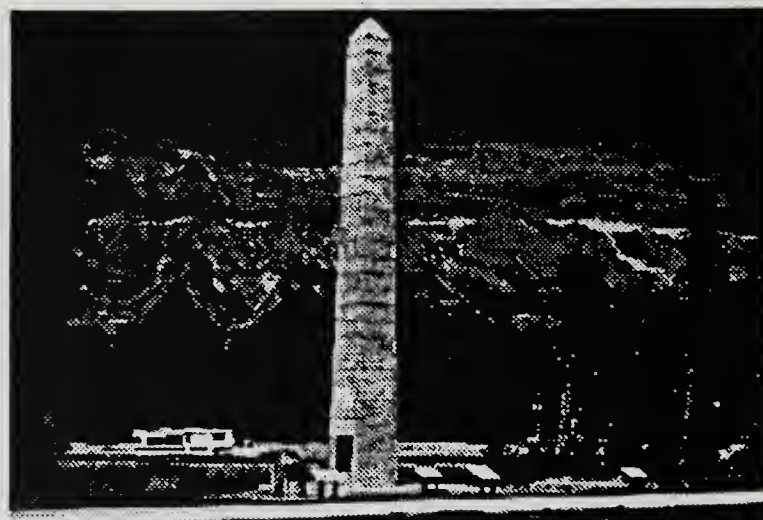
**Four Lane - Developed**  
*Road edge landscaped to engineering standards*

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

*Facilities*



***Two Lane - Gravel Improved***  
*Wisconsin's Rustic Routes - Sign only*



***Four Lane - Undivided***  
*Interpretive Site*



***Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders***  
*Undeveloped pull - out*



***Four Lane - Developed***  
*Developed commercial facilities*



***Two Lane - Wide Shoulders***  
*Developed pull - out*



***Four Lane - Developed***  
*Information kiosks in rest areas*

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

Signs



*Two Lane - Gravel Improved*

*Trail Marker*



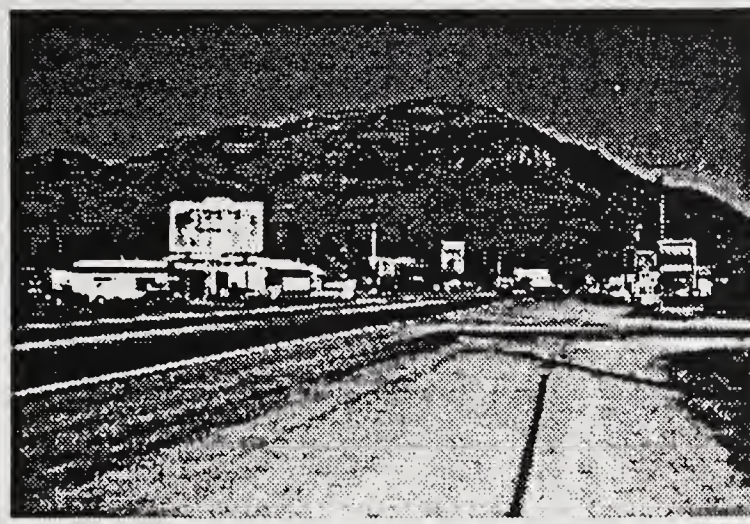
*Four Lane - Undivided*

*Kiosk in pull-out*



*Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders*

*Forest Service Scenic Byways Sign*



*Four Lane - Developed*

*Poor commercial signage*



*Two Lane - Wide Shoulders*

*Roadside Sign*

*Four Lane - Developed*

*Integrated commercial signage*

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

ROADWAY TYPE	BIKE PATH		DESIGN FEATURES ACCESSORIES	ROAD EDGE/ LANDSCAPE	FACILITIES	SIGNS
	ADJACENT	SEPARATE				
			CATTLE GUARDS	✓	PULLOUTS GRAVEL	✓
TWO LANE GRAVEL IMPROVED OR UNIMPROVED			HISTORIC IMPROVEMENTS	✓	PULLOUTS PAVED W/BARRIER, ETC	✓
TWO LANE PAVED NARROW SHOULDERS		✓	BARRIERS	✓	INTERPRETIVE INFORMATION	✓
TWO LANE PAVED WIDE SHOULDERS	✓		BRIDGES	✓	REST STOP/TOILET, ETC.	✓
FOUR LANE UNDIVIDED	✓		INTERMODEL CROSSING	✓	DEVELOPED FACILITIES E.G. VENDING	✓
FOUR LANE DEVELOPED/DIVIDED		✓	SLOW/PASSING LANES	✓	RECREATIONAL NODE	✓
						MARKERS LOCATION/DIRECTIONAL
						BYWAYS SIGNS
						INFORMATION/INTERPRETATION SIGNS
						SIGN KIOSK
						SIGNS WITH/FOR DEVELOPMENT

- ✓ Represents typical occurrence of these facilities on this road type  
 • Represents potential for these facilities on this road type

Table 3.2 Road Types and Associated Facilities

## Minimum Standards for Design Elements and Auxiliary Features

For the purpose of scenic designation the following design elements are considered most important from a safety and operational standpoint:

- o Design speed
- o Maximum grade
- o Number of lanes
- o Lane width
- o Pavement surface type
- o Shoulder width
- o Safety barriers

For all the above elements, except safety barriers, suggested minimum standards are shown in table 3.3. (based on the scenic byways classification scheme on page 16 of Appendix D).

For auxiliary facilities, a uniform system of directional and informational signs, and route markers for scenic roads needs to be developed. Such a system would provide consistent guidance to the traveler on routes which pass through multiple jurisdictions.

Support facilities such as rest areas and information centers would be necessary at different levels on all scenic routes. For example, on popular scenic routes where a high number of visitors are anticipated, the highest level of such facilities should be provided. On smaller, less traveled routes, only roadside information and interpretive signs may be needed. On routes that currently serve as scenic routes (FS, BLM), the adequacy of available facilities should be evaluated. For this purpose, some criteria need to be established for the provision of these facilities. Such criteria may be based on the number of visitors, the scenic, cultural, and historic features, and some minimum spacing to determine the number of facilities required.

Suggested Design Guides and Standards for Scenic Roads.

Scenic Route Category	Terrain	Design Speed (mph)	Maximum Grade %	Number of Lanes	Minimum Lane Width (feet)	Pavement Surface Type	Minimum Shoulder Width (feet)
A	Level	70	3	$\geq 4$	12	H	10
	Rolling	60	4	$\geq 4$	12	H	10
	Mountain	50	7	$\geq 4$	12	H	10
B	Level	70	3	2-4	12	H	8
	Rolling	60	4	2-4	12	H	8
	Mountain	50	7	2-4	12	H	8
C	Level	60	8	2	8	H	8
	Rolling	50	8-12	2	8	H	6
	Mountain	40	12	2	8	H	6
D	Level	50	7	2	8	I	2
	Rolling	40	11	2	8	I	2
	Mountain	30	16	2	8	I	2
E	Level	15	10	1-2	14*	I,L	0
	Rolling	15	10-16	1-2	14*	I,L	0
	Mountain	10	16	1-2	14*	I,L	0

\* - Minimum Travelway Width

Pavement Surface Type

H - High (Concrete, Bituminous)

I - Intermediate (Surface Treatments, Bituminous)

L - Low (Earth Roads of Stabilized or Loose Material)

Table 3.3 Suggested Design Guides and Standards for Scenic Roads

### Scenic Byways Unit Costs

The objective of this study is to identify existing scenic byway cost data that could be used as a type of "quick reference" guide in analyzing the feasibility of improving a scenic byway in Montana.

Information was gathered from the National Scenic Byways Study entitled, *Safety, Traffic and Cost Considerations on Scenic Byways*. That study found that it was impossible to develop a meaningful, generalized cost per mile figure. Improvement type differences appeared to account for substantial variation in the data. Therefore, it was decided to break down costs by improvement type, features within each improvement type, and to show them in matrix form (table 3.4). Types of improvement identified were as follows:

Scenic overlooks	Photo opportunities
Campsites	Roadside rest area
Boat launches	Historic and cultural sites
Hiking trails	Bicycle trails
Information centers	Visitor centers
Picnic sites	Existing road improvement -- add 12' lane

Improvements were further broken down into individual components or features as follows:

Operation costs	Parking per space
Landscaping	Buildings
Rest rooms	Climbing lanes
Picnic tables	Barbecues
Trails	Roads -- site specific
Right-of-way	Maintenance
Trash pickup	Signing

The features commonly associated with each improvement are represented by an 'X' in Table 3.4. Costs are categorized by low, medium, and high.

The following unit costs were calculated by the Department because the costs identified in Table 3.4 are dated '87-'89 and are based on the national survey and not specific data from Montana. Both sets of figures should be restricted to estimating likely program costs, or in making a first attempt at individual project costs. For engineering, more refined cost estimates are necessary.

Passing lanes (\$/mile) .....\$350,000 to \$450,000  
 Widen Road for bike/ped path (\$/mile).....\$150,000 to \$200,000  
 Parking areas or pullouts (30' x 500')...\$50,000 to \$100,000  
 Rest Area.....\$750,000 and up

All costs include clearing, right-of-way, etc.

Source: Jeffrey Ebert, Supervisor - Project Analysis - MDT

Table 3.4

### Unit Costs for Scenic Byways Improvement

[illegible]

USING THE MATRIX AS A COST ESTIMATING TOOL

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLE INDICATES HOW TO USE THE MATRIX TO ESTIMATE THE COST TO CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN A CAMERA STOP.

THE COST INDICATED IN THE MATRIX FOR A TYPICAL MEDIUM COST CAMERA STOP WERE OBTAINED FROM THE ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION. THE CAMERA STOP USED, WAS ALONG THE CORONADO TRAIL SCENIC BYWAY, THIS CAMERA STOP CONSISTED OF APPROXIMATELY 12,250 SQUARE FEET OF PAVING, WHICH INCLUDED A DRIVE THROUGH LAKE AND FIVE PARKING SPACES. THE COST FOR THE PAVING FOR THIS CAMERA WOULD BE FIVE SPACES TIMES 92,300.00 EACH FOR A TOTAL OF 461,500.00.

FROM THE MAINTAIN THE WEEDING COST FOR ONE ACRE OF LAND REQUIRED FOR THE CAMERA STOP IS \$1000.00.

THE MEDIUM COST FOR ANNUAL MAINTENANCE FOR THE CAMERA STOP IS \$1,500.00. THE MEDIUM COST FOR ANNUAL TRASH PICKUP FOR THE CAMERA STOP IS \$2,400.00.

THE MEDIAN COST FOR ONE MILE OF SEARCH IN EACH DIRECTION TO THE CAMERA STOP IS TWO TIMES THE COST OF \$450.00 FOR ONE MILE, WHICH IS \$900.00.

IN SUMMARY THE MEDIUM COST TO CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN A CAMERA STOP IS 017,300.00.

IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE MATRIX DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT AREA MULTIPLIERS AND OTHER SITE SPECIFIC INFORMATION, WHICH COULD EFFECT TOTAL COST.

### A. 14th Climbing Lane

### 3. Internal Access Road

**1990-1991**

**THE**

U. IAHN BICYCLE IRON

3. % who access food

**8. 1/2 WHO ACCESS ROAD**

C. Based Upon 24,500 Sq.ft. Area (NO parking spaces)

M. Based Upon 2,250 Sq.Ft. Area Is Parking spaces!

2. Based Upon 122,500 Sq. Ft. Area 150 parking spaces

J. Based Upon 40,000 Sq.ft. Area 175 parking spaces!

Y. Based Upon 5000 Syst. Information Or Visitor Center

### Scenic Byways Signing Options

Most scenic byways programs have a logo or identification sign which marks the roadways designated as scenic byways. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service, among other federal agencies, have developed signage systems using individual logos and federal sign standards.

Also, there are existing informational and directional signs throughout the State of Montana that could be incorporated into a scenic byways system.

A compendium of sign types and examples is included in the following categories (Appendix E) :

1. Scenic byway logos
2. Agency logos
3. Washington's interpretive marker program
4. Character signs
5. State of Montana signs
6. Standard Federal signs

Generally, signs should be in brown, blue, green or natural wood color backgrounds, with white symbols or lettering.

The following is adapted from the National Park Service's signing recommendations (National Park Service Sign Manual, 1989)

### **Planning Considerations for Signs**

- o In determining the need for a sign or marker, the following questions should be answered:
  - What should the visitor know?
  - Is guidance or a message needed? If so, where and what?
  - How shall the message be presented?
  - Is the sign for drivers, cyclists, or pedestrians?
  - At what speed is the person traveling?
- o To be effective the sign should:
  - Fulfill a need.
  - Command the attention and respect of the user.
  - Convey a clear, simple message.
  - Give adequate time for a proper response.
- o To fulfill these requirements, the following six basic considerations should be made:
  - Uniformity of signs
  - Design features including size, contrast, color, shape, composition, lighting, and lettering
  - Placement in relation to sight distances
  - High standard of maintenance

- Consideration of background materials when placing sign
- Appropriate sign backing treatment
- o Design and placement of signs should be compatible with vehicle speed, traffic pattern, and the driver's visual perception responses

### **Types of Signs**

- o Standard traffic control signs
- o Directional/informational guide signs
- o Entrance signs
- o Bicycle trail signs
- o Pedestrian signs (urban or motor vehicle related)
- o Interpretive signs/wayside exhibits
- o Trail markers/back-country signs
- o Symbol signs (internationally recognized)

### **Recreation Information Topics**

- o Provide trails and user information on the following subjects through signs, brochures, maps, and interpretive exhibits:
  - Private/public land areas and boundaries
  - Trail rating, distance, alignments, loops, and support facilities
  - Trail user opportunities (motorized/non-motorized)
  - Cultural sites, local customs, and land use within the corridor
  - Natural and cultural features of interest
  - Trail user responsibilities, ethics, and minimum impact guidelines
  - Off-highway vehicle designations on adjacent public lands

### **Considerations for a Montana Scenic Byways Program**

There are six major considerations in the development of a scenic byways program in Montana

- o How to coordinate Montana scenic byways signs with FS and BLM byways/backways programs.
  - Separate designation (i.e. maintain individual sign types and logos).
  - Underbuild Montana byways logo on signs or vice versa ( i.e. smaller sign under FS/BLM signs).
  - Inset Montana byways logo on FS/BLM byways sign.
  - Develop new joint logo that combines the State and FS/BLM logos (MOU necessary). Original logos for each would be used on non-jointly designated routes.
- o How to coordinate scenic byways signing with other specially designated routes in Montana.
  - Separate designation (i.e. maintain individual sign types and logos).
  - Underbuild Montana byways logo on existing special designation signs or vice versa ( i.e. smaller sign under special designation signs).

- Inset Montana byways logo on special designation sign.
  - Develop new joint logo that combines the State byways and special designation logos. Original logos for each would be used on non-jointly designated routes.
- o What logo should be adopted for a Montana scenic byways program?
    - Design logo as part of the Montana Scenic Byways Program Development (MDT or Consultant with Advisory Committee Approval).
    - Design logo as part of the public involvement process -- advertise a public design contest with nominal award for selected logo (this would be a good PR and promotional opportunity)
  - o Where should the signs be located along the designated route?
    - At the beginning and end -- in both directions.
    - Evenly spaced throughout the entire route (i.e. every 5 miles, etc.)
    - Random locations in coordination with other sign placement -- this avoids cluttering the route with a variety of road signs.
    - In concert with exceptional vistas or points of interest (this is a way of reminding motorists of upcoming attractions without having separate signs).
  - o What level of signing is appropriate (i.e. trailblazer, interpretive, etc.)?
    - Let available funding dictate sign strategy beyond trailblazer signs (i.e. the more funding available, the more interpretative signing possible).
    - Establish level of signing programmatically, with amendments required for variances.
  - o How to coordinate Montana scenic byways signs with the standards of other affected agencies (i.e., Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, National Park Service, etc.).

### Use Projections

Insufficient baseline data was available to conduct a statistically accurate assessment of projected increases in traffic on designated byways. However, the team used data available from other states to conduct a general assessment of use projections. Because most of the existing data indicates that there is a direct relationship between byways promotion and level of use, this analysis compares two levels of promotional efforts -- 1) no promotion; and 2) full promotion with color program brochures, including route specific descriptions and statewide distribution, inclusion in state travel information and highway maps.

*No promotion* -- The investigation found that a non-detectable change in use patterns would be exhibited on scenic byways designated under a program with no promotional support. However, as awareness of the route increased over time -- through word-of-mouth or additional signing on non-designated routes -- use rates could increase. Any increase would be difficult to attribute to designation unless comparative analyses were conducted with the state average use rates.

*Full promotion* -- Full promotion of a scenic byways program can dramatically increase use along designated routes. Active promotion serves to increase travelers' awareness of the routes prior to embarking on their journeys, and allows time for the inclusion of routes into travel plans. Color

brochures that offer descriptions of specific routes create an interest in, and a desire to visit, scenic byways.

Utah has a very active promotional program that includes a very distinctive color brochure. The brochure details the specific scenic byway and backway routes, including pictures, route maps and full descriptions of the route and its attractions. Utah attributes a definite increase in byway and backway use to their active promotional efforts, including the brochure. Two recently designated routes in Utah experienced an increase of between fifteen percent and forty-eight percent -- between the year prior to designation and the year following. Although the dramatic increase might well be attributable to designation, exact causes for the increase could not be determined without a detailed, long-term evaluation.

Actual figures for predicting use increases are difficult to determine. Even with accurate baseline data, there is very little way to determine what percent of the increase is due to designation and the associated promotional efforts. One study that could be used as a model to determine the increase in use rates and how much is attributable to designation is entitled, "The Economic Impact of Travel on Scenic Byways", prepared by the U.S. Travel Data Center. Although the model described in the study was developed for calculating the impact of designation on economic factors, the underlying principles are appropriate for use increases. The model is based on the importance of distinguishing between increases due to daily commercial, industrial, and residential highway usage and byways usage. Methodologies used in the model could be extrapolated to assist in the determination of use increases from designation. Before any analysis can be conducted however, accurate and sufficient baseline data must be available for each route designation. Absence of this data would render the results of any evaluation useless.

Generally, it is possible to link designation with some increase in the use of byways routes. However, too many variables must be considered to accurately estimate use increases due to designation. Use rates on designated routes could be influenced in two ways: 1) preparation of brochures and guides for designated byways routes under the program; and 2) providing for an intensive program that offers special byways attractions (bike paths, information kiosks, etc.) -- thereby supplying more incentives for travelers to use routes.

### Level of Service Analysis

A basic level of service (LOS) analysis was conducted in 1992 to provide a general profile of the State's NHS and State Primary System routes. The resulting information was used to identify the range of impacts scenic byway designations may have on routes classified as level of service A-F.

The analysis was not intended to identify route-specific changes in LOS ratings as a result of potential byways designation. It does demonstrate, however, that there is a specific need to consider LOS ratings and the impacts of designation on individual routes as they are nominated for designation.

The level of service analysis was conducted for Montana's NHS and State Primary System routes only. No LOS data was available for this investigation on non-NHS/State Primary System routes. LOS takes into consideration both mobility and accessibility. The primary measure of service quality is percent time delay, with speed and capacity utilization used as secondary measures. Table 3.5 explains the level of service breakdown considered in this investigation.

TABLE 3.5 LEVEL-OF-SERVICE CRITERIA FOR GENERAL TWO-LANE HIGHWAY SEGMENTS

LOS	PERCENT TIME DELAY	v/c Ratio *																				
		LEVEL TERRAIN							ROLLING TERRAIN							MOUNTAIN TERRAIN						
		AVG <sup>a</sup> SPEED	PERCENT NO PASSING ZONES						AVG <sup>a</sup> SPEED	PERCENT NO PASSING ZONES						AVG <sup>a</sup> SPEED	PERCENT NO PASSING ZONES					
			0	20	40	60	80	100		0	20	40	60	80	100		0	20	40	60	80	100
A	≤ 30	≥ 58	0.15	0.12	0.08	0.07	0.05	0.04	≥ 57	0.15	0.10	0.07	0.05	0.04	0.03	≥ 56	0.14	0.08	0.07	0.04	0.02	0.01
B	≤ 45	≥ 55	0.27	0.24	0.21	0.18	0.17	0.16	≥ 54	0.26	0.23	0.18	0.17	0.15	0.13	≥ 54	0.25	0.20	0.18	0.13	0.12	0.10
C	≤ 60	≥ 52	0.43	0.38	0.38	0.34	0.33	0.32	≥ 51	0.42	0.38	0.35	0.32	0.30	0.28	≥ 48	0.38	0.33	0.28	0.23	0.20	0.16
D	≤ 75	≥ 50	0.64	0.52	0.50	0.58	0.58	0.57	≥ 48	0.62	0.57	0.52	0.48	0.46	0.43	≥ 45	0.58	0.50	0.45	0.40	0.37	0.33
E	≥ 75	≥ 45	1.00	.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	≥ 40	0.87	0.84	0.82	0.81	0.80	0.80	≥ 35	0.81	0.87	0.84	0.82	0.80	0.78
F	100	≤ 45	-	-	-	-	-	-	≤ 40	-	-	-	-	-	-	≤ 35	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3.5 Level of Service

Source: 1985 Highway Capacity Manual

**Level of Service A** -- The highest quality of traffic service occurs when motorists are able to drive at their desired speed. Without strict enforcement, this highest quality, representative of LOS-A, would result in average speeds approaching 60 mph on two-lane highways. The passing frequency required to maintain these speeds has not reached a demanding level. Passing demand is well below passing capacity, and almost no platoons of three or more vehicles are observed. Drivers would be delayed no more than 30 percent of the time by slow-moving vehicles. (1985 Highway Capacity Manual).

48% or 2615.9 miles of Montana's NHS and State Primary System routes are rated as LOS-A. Byways designation on these routes would be of little significance in terms of mobility and accessibility -- thereby causing little concern for increases in accident ratios and congestion.

**Level of Service B** -- LOS-B characterizes the region of traffic flow wherein speeds of 55 mph or slightly higher are expected on level terrain. Passing demand needed to maintain desired speeds becomes significant and approximately equals the passing capacity at the lower boundary of LOS-B. Drivers are delayed up to 45 percent of the time on the average. Service flow rates of 750 pcph, total in both directions, can be achieved under ideal conditions. Above this flow rate, the number of platoons forming in the traffic stream begins to increase dramatically. (1985 Highway Capacity Manual).

34% or 1848.9 miles of Montana's NHS and State Primary System routes are rated as LOS-B. Byways designation on these routes would have little affect on daily activities, because an increase in traffic would likely be of little cause for mobility or accessibility delays.

**Level of Service C** -- Further increases in flow characterize level of service C, resulting in noticeable increases in platoon formation, platoon size, and frequency of passing impediment.

Average speed still exceeds 52 mph on level terrain, even though unrestricted passing demand exceeds passing capacity. At higher volume levels, chaining of platoons and significant reductions in passing capacity begin to occur. While traffic flow is stable, it is becoming susceptible to congestion due to turning traffic and slow-moving vehicles. Time delays are up to 60 percent. A service flow rate of up to 1,200 pcph, total in both directions, can be accommodated under ideal conditions. (1985 Highway Capacity Manual).

420 miles, or 8% of Montana's NHS and State Primary System routes are rated as LOS-C. Byways designation on these routes would have the potential to cause some mobility and accessibility delays. Increased volumes could cause significant congestion behind slow-moving vehicles -- increasing the chance for accidents.

*Level of Service D* -- Unstable traffic flow is approached as traffic flows enter LOS-D. The two opposing traffic streams essentially begin to operate separately at higher volume levels, as passing becomes extremely difficult. Passing demand is very high, while passing capacity approaches zero. Mean platoon sizes of 5-10 vehicles are common, although speeds of 50 mph can still be maintained under ideal conditions. The fraction of no passing zones along the roadway section usually has little influence on passing. Turning vehicles and/or roadside distractions cause major shockwaves in the traffic stream. The percentage of time motorists are delayed approaches 75 percent. Maximum service flow rates of 1,800 pcph, total in both directions, can be maintained under ideal conditions. (1985 Highway Capacity Manual).

162.1 miles, or 3% of Montana's NHS and State Primary System routes are rated as LOS-D. Byways designation of these routes could result in significant mobility and accessibility delays -- making a difficult situation worse for highway safety and maintenance considerations. The ability to pass would be very limited, with maximum speeds reaching only 50 mph. Slow-moving vehicles associated with the byways designation would add to the congestion problems.

*Level of Service E* -- LOS-E is defined as traffic flow conditions on two-lane highways having a percent time delay of greater than 75 percent. Under ideal conditions, speeds will drop below 50 mph. Average travel speeds on highways with less than ideal conditions will be slower, as low as 25 mph on sustained upgrades. Passing is virtually impossible under level of service E conditions, and platooning becomes intense when slower vehicles or other interruptions are encountered. (1985 Highway Capacity Manual).

51.7 miles, or 1% of Montana's NHS and State Primary System routes are rated as LOS-E. Byways designation on these routes would result in significant mobility and accessibility delays -- causing significant concerns for safety and maintenance considerations. Passing on these routes would be impossible because slow-moving vehicles associated with designation would regularly be encountered.

*Level of Service F* -- As with other highway types, LOS-F represents heavily congested flow with traffic demand exceeding capacity. Volumes are lower than capacity, and speeds are below capacity speed. Level of service E is seldom attained over extended sections on level terrain as more than a transient condition; most often, perturbations in traffic flow as level E is approached cause a rapid transition of level of service F. (1985 Highway Capacity Manual).

No routes are currently classified as level of service F in Montana. Designation of routes classified as LOS-E could potentially be bumped LOS-F depending on the level of promotion and type of byway designated. Six percent, or 354 miles of the routes studied had unrated levels of service.

Although only 12% of Montana's NHS and State Primary System routes are rated as level of service C-F, a majority of that mileage is located on scenic routes such as the Gallatin Canyon and the East Shore of Flathead Lake. This emphasizes the need for an LOS evaluation to be conducted on each candidate route. The evaluation would need to establish a tolerance rating for that route to determine the true affect of designation. For example, both the Going-to-the-Sun Highway in Glacier Park and Highway 35 on the East shore of Flathead Lake are likely rated as LOS-D or E in the summer. However, the sustained tolerance level is quite different for each. Highway users on Going-to-the-Sun are typically more willing to tolerate the congestion and poor passing opportunity whereas those on Highway 35, including large-scale truck traffic, are less tolerant of such conditions. Factors to be considered in determining tolerance would include: 1) percent user classification (i.e. semi trucks, RV, passenger car, light truck, etc.); 2) highway alignment and geometrics; 3) current level of service classification; and 4) seasonal characteristics. The resulting tolerance rating could then be used as a designation criteria, or simply as a guideline figure for approving designation. For example, a route with a LOS rating of D-E and a low tolerance rating (Hwy 35) might only be allowed a signing program with limited promotion opportunity, whereas the same route with a high tolerance rating (Going-to-the-Sun) might be approved for a full designation including interpretative pullouts, bike paths, etc..

Too many variables must be defined for this investigation to analyze, with any statistical accuracy, the impact of byways designation on various routes. The variables to consider include: 1) tolerance; 2) mileage for LOS classification on different routes; 3) location of candidate portion of route; 4) the LOS classification where the route segment lie (i.e. Does a route classified at LOS D fall at the lower or upper threshold of that classification?); 5) classification of non-NHS and State Primary System routes; 6) data acquisition and availability; 7) byways promotional effort; and 8) level of byways proposed (i.e. signing only vs. full interpretative pullouts, etc.). For this reason, it is recommended that each candidate route be analyzed in relation to level of service after its nomination as a candidate route -- rather than using LOS rating as a criteria. The general rule of thumb would be for the approval of byways on routes with  $LOS > C$  for low tolerance and  $LOS > D$  for high tolerance routes.

### Traveler Needs Assessment

Very few statistics were available on the needs of motorists on Montana's highways. The only information available for consideration was a brief report identifying existing, planned and proposed rest areas on the State's Interstate and Primary System routes (figure 3.5). Although this information is valuable in terms of baseline assessments, it does not identify reasons for the location of the rest areas. Without a specific formula defining location strategies, it is difficult to predict the potential impact of increased traffic on the need for such facilities.

This report will make the assumption that if an increase in route usage results from byways designation, there may be an increased demand for additional or expanded rest area facilities on some portions of the route.



## CHAPTER 4

### SCENIC BYWAYS CRITERIA

#### TASK DESCRIPTION

Chapter 4 marks the beginning of this investigation's program component. The root of any scenic byways program is the development of criteria. Criteria define whether or not a specific route is eligible to become a designated scenic byway. This investigation considers the full range of criteria possible for a potential scenic byways program in Montana. From this comprehensive list of criteria evolved a select few that were considered paramount for the existing economic, social, and environmental settings in Montana. These criteria are used in Chapter 5 to support the development of Program alternatives and in Chapter 6 to identify issues and protection measures.

This chapter also presents a regional approach to byways designation, strategies for their designation, and alternatives for oversight of a byways program and designated routes.

#### CONCEPTUAL BYWAYS REGIONS

Five geographic regions were originally considered to emphasize a regional structure for the Scenic Byways Program in Montana. The regional characterization was developed for two primary reasons: 1) to maintain consistency with MDT's current financial and administrative districts, and 2) to help ensure equitable and proportional designation of scenic byways across Montana.

An Advisory Committee meeting was facilitated by the consultant to achieve consensus on four points: 1) whether or not the Program should be based on regions, 2) if so, delineation of byways regions, 3) methodology for determining the number or miles of scenic byways to be designated, and 4) methodology(s) for determining distribution of byways in each region. Scenarios available for distributional consideration included, but were not limited to: 1) equal distribution between all regions, 2) population ratios, 3) miles of highway, 4) funding allocation ratios (MDT), and 5) number of communities. After considerable discussion, the Advisory Committee concluded that the program should be based on a statewide plan rather than regional distribution (See page 72).

#### POTENTIAL SCENIC BYWAYS CRITERIA

The following section introduces a range of criteria that were considered by the Advisory Committee. The criteria are divided into six categories: 1) intrinsic value, 2) safety and road type or conditions, 3) roadway character, 4) local commitment of resources, 5) compatibility, and 6) management/protection. Each category is briefly introduced below with a subsequent listing of the criteria for consideration. Final Committee recommendations regarding the criteria are presented on page 74.

In order for a route designated under a Montana scenic byways program to be eligible for designation under the National Program, it must meet the criteria established by the National Advisory Committee. Therefore, the National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) criteria are also identified where appropriate.

## Intrinsic Value

*NSBP* -- Route must be considered extraordinary in at least one of six categories of “intrinsic value” -- providing either scenic, historic, natural, cultural, recreational, or archaeological qualities of outstanding merit.

Intrinsically valued criteria are generally qualitative and represent the essential nature or constitution of a scenic byway. A route that is nominated for designation as a scenic byway would typically exhibit the “intrinsic” value of its scenery, natural and/or recreational amenities, and cultural or historic significance. Although these values could be quantified, it is the general “nature” of the route that defines its intrinsic value. The following list of intrinsic values are presented for consideration as designation criteria (singularly or in combination):

### *Possible Criteria (Thematic Qualities):*

- o Scenic/visual\*
- o Historic/cultural \*
- o Natural features\*                      \* Individual criterion are described on page 6.
- o Recreational opportunities\*
- o Scientific/educational\*
  
- o The proposed scenic byway must possess one of the outstanding thematic qualities listed above.
  
- o A scenic byway application must contain some of the following elements:
  - Streams, lakes and wetlands
  - Striking stands of timber
  - Unusual geological formations
  - Outstanding mountains, foothills, and desert scenes
  - Exceptional pastoral views
  - Dramatic urban scenes
  - Prairie, cactus, and wildflower areas
  - Cultural and historic landmarks

## Safety and Road Type or Conditions

*NSBP* -- Route meets criteria for user safety, user facilities, and local and state plans to maintain the intrinsic values of the corridor through which it passes.

*NSBP* -- Route must safely and conveniently accommodate two-wheel-drive automobiles with standard clearances.

Safety factors, road conditions, and route types are often considered as criteria for designation of scenic byways. Selection of these criteria is based on the managing authority’s interest in the traveling public’s health and general welfare. The following list of safety and road factors are presented for consideration as designation criteria:

### *Possible Criteria:*

- o Route should meet all AASHTO standards for highway design and safety.

- o Route must be an existing road -- including roads that may take time and money to bring up to scenic byway standards.
- o Route must be paved with an identifiable shoulder.
- o Route type must be classified as at least "improved gravel."
- o Route must accommodate two-wheel-drive automobiles with standard clearances -- including all recreational vehicles.
- o Route requires four-wheel-drive or high clearance vehicle (backway only).
- o Route must be open year-round.
- o Route requires four-wheel-drive and/or chains necessary in inclement weather (backway).
- o Route must safely accommodate anticipated traffic volumes.
- o Route must be level-of-service C or above.

### Roadway Character

*NSBP* -- Route must safely and conveniently accommodate, where feasible, bicycle and pedestrian travel.

*NSBP* -- Route should not have too many gaps, but should be as continuous as possible.

Roadway character is an important consideration when developing byways criteria. These criteria are different from the intrinsic and safety related criteria because they involve opportunities associated with the route and the route's general character. The following characteristics are presented for consideration as designation criteria:

#### *Possible Criteria:*

- o The route should be a destination in and of itself.
- o The route should be a connecting link between existing and proposed points of interest.
- o The route should be visually and physically accessible -- including the elderly and handicapped.
- o Route should safely accommodate alternative usage wherever feasible.
- o Route should include complementary facilities when possible.
- o Byway should not have too many gaps, but should be as continuous as possible.
- o Route should have an identifiable beginning/end point.
- o Route must have a minimum length requirement.

- o Signing of existing designated routes must be consolidated with byway signing.
- o Existing signing should not detract from the scenic qualities of the byway.

### Local Commitment of Resources

*NSBP* -- Corridor management plan must show strong evidence of local support and continuing advocacy and commitment to the designation of a highway as a scenic byway.

The success of individual byways depends greatly on the level of support generated and maintained at the local level. Financial and personal resources combine to form the necessary support network that ensures long-term viability of the route. The following resource commitments are presented for consideration as designation criteria:

#### *Possible Criteria:*

- o Route must have a strong body of local support and continuing advocacy and commitment to the designation of a highway as a scenic byway. The following types of resources may be considered:
  - o Financial resources
  - o Human resources
  - o Physical resources
- o There must be a commitment from all agencies and landowners involved.

### Compatibility

*NSBP* -- Route must demonstrate a practical balance between private property rights and the public interest through such tools as land use zoning, conveyance of easements, and economic incentives.

The compatibility of a scenic byway with its adjacent land area is a paramount consideration in the designation of scenic byways in Montana. There are both managed and changing landscapes across the State -- compatibility with each is necessary to ensure the integrity of the scenic byways' original intent. The following compatibility issues are presented for consideration as designation criteria:

#### *Possible Criteria:*

- o Designation should provide for a balance between private property rights and the public interest through such tools as land use zoning, conveyance of easements, and economic incentives.
- o Existing land use adjacent to the route should be compatible with scenic byways objectives (includes outdoor advertising).
- o Corridor management plan should be consistent with federal, state, local and other land use/management plans.
- o Route should be compatible with recreational, aesthetic and management needs of an area and should not conflict with existing management plans.

- o Levels of protection should be highest through areas of greatest intrinsic value.
- o Designation should demonstrate a minimization of intrusion on the visitor experience.

### Management/Protection

*NSBP* -- A corridor management plan must accompany each nomination. Plan must demonstrate how the byway will be operated and managed, how corridor preservation and enhancement will be implemented, and include a map and inventory of existing and planned development.

*NSBP* -- Corridor management plan must demonstrate that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and include a plan for making improvements to enhance that experience.

*NSBP* -- Corridor management plan must provide an indication that the levels of corridor protection will be highest through areas of greatest intrinsic value.

*NSBP* -- Corridor management plan must contain a viable marketing plan describing various measures that would be taken to attract travelers.

Long-term maintenance of the State's scenic byways must be ensured. Without management and protection measures in place, scenic byways could lose the very characteristics that identified them as such during the nomination process. The following management and protection concepts are presented for consideration as designation criteria and guidelines for future management direction.

#### *Possible Criteria:*

- o A corridor management plan must accompany each nomination.
- o Route must be based on a conceptual plan or master plan.
- o The levels of corridor protection will be highest through areas of greatest intrinsic value. Such areas must be indicated in the Corridor Management Plan.
- o The Corridor Management Plan must demonstrate that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and include a plan for making improvement to enhance that experience.
- o The Corridor Management Plan must contain a viable marketing strategy describing various measures that would be taken to attract travelers.
- o An environmental assessment must be done.

### Other Criteria Available for Consideration

- o Sufficient land area for facilities
- o Minimum length of one mile
- o Service to major population centers
- o Harmony with other highway users
- o Availability and compatibility of existing facilities

- o Public demand
- o Loop capabilities
- o Location and distribution across the State
- o The enhancement of tourist distribution
- o Existing usage densities
- o Establishing that no major improvements are scheduled that would change character

## DETAILED PROFILE OF POTENTIAL BYWAYS CRITERIA

The criteria identified above are described below in terms of 1) relevance to scenic byways designation, 2) definition or description of the resource, 3) how to identify the resource, and 4) management implications.

### Intrinsic Value

#### Scenic/Visual Quality

**Relevance** The criteria of scenic/visual quality is contained in the definition of a scenic byway. In addition, it has been incorporated by most states in their list of criteria for identifying a scenic byway. "Natural Scenery" was the most cited criteria (18 states) in the 1990 *Scenic America* survey.

**Definition** Visual quality is determined as "the visual significance given to a landscape determined by cultural values and the landscape's intrinsic physical properties."

Scenic byways contain some of the following elements:

- o Streams, lakes and wetlands
- o Striking stands of timber
- o Unusual geological formations
- o Outstanding mountains, foothills, and/or desert scenes
- o Exceptional pastoral views
- o Dramatic urban scenes
- o Prairie, cactus, and wildflower areas
- o Cultural and historic landmarks

**Identification** Visual resources are key components in determining a route's eligibility as a scenic byway. There are many different ways to analyze visual quality and potential impacts. A typical methodology would be:

- o Conduct the landscape description or inventory
- o Assess user (or viewer) characteristics
- o Identify viewpoints and views
- o Assess land use characteristics
- o Prepare a visual impact assessment and mitigation summary

For the purposes of establishing the scenic quality of a route, it is recommended that a simple user-based method be employed to identify landscape characteristics that have high scenic quality. This may be done using photographic ranking methods, video or site visits, and work sessions. The required result is that the route is publicly acknowledged to be of outstanding visual quality.

**Management** Once it has been established that a route has visual significance, more detailed visual analysis may be applied to assist in determining potential impacts and protection methods.

### **Natural Features/Resources**

**Relevance** As for scenic quality, the importance of natural features is contained in the definition of scenic byways.

**Definition** Natural features/resources consist of:

- o Landform - e.g., mountains, plains
- o Geology - e.g., rock types, cliffs, canyons
- o Water - e.g., lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands
- o Vegetation - e.g., forests, savannas, meadows
- o Wildlife - e.g., birds, mammals
- o Agriculture - e.g., orchards, pastures, row crops

**Identification** The existence of unique natural features may be determined by drawing a map of the route and the natural features associated with it. The natural features should generally be acknowledged to be of important, outstanding or unique quality.

**Management** Future management of the byway should consider methods to protect outstanding natural features ranging from interpretation/education to land use control.

### **Recreational Opportunities and Facilities**

**Relevance** As for scenic and natural features, the importance of recreational opportunities is also cited in the definition of a scenic byway, as well as included in the criteria of many other states. The 1990 National Scenic Byways Study (Federal Highway Administration, 1990) stated that in 30,000 miles of scenic byways, "about 20,000 miles of State scenic byways offer such complimentary services as rest stops, pullouts, camping grounds, lodging, restaurants, and service stations. About 13,000 miles include parallel hiking trails, and 8,000 miles include marked bikeways."

**Definition** Recreational opportunities range from "driving for pleasure" to biking, hiking, interpretation, education, and wildlife viewing. Recreational opportunities usually include some level of developed facilities. The 1990 National Scenic Byways Study (Federal Highway Administration, 1990) study describes complementary facilities as follows: "along the scenic road a traveler can find roadside rests, picnic areas, camera stops, scenic overlooks, campgrounds, boat-launching sites, trails, and other special facilities. These are identified as complementary facilities by some state scenic road programs and in scenic road studies. Complementary facilities add depth, breadth, and additional personal meaning to the recreational opportunities along scenic byways."

A further level of development of complementary facilities includes commercial hospitality resources, such as accommodations for lodging and dining.

**Identification** Recreational opportunities and facilities can be identified on a map which shows the route and all adjacent recreational opportunities and facilities. Consideration should be given to how well the road provides access to the recreational opportunities, the quality of opportunities, and the range of types of recreational opportunities or facilities. Clearly, a route which has good access to numerous different high quality recreational opportunities, well supported with necessary facilities, will be an excellent candidate for a scenic byway. Additionally, the route should be evaluated for potential recreational opportunities; for example, an interesting hiking trail may exist close to the route, but will require installation of a trailhead access.

**Management** Existing recreational opportunities should be maintained. Consideration should be given to development of new opportunities. Built facilities should be designed to be compatible with their setting and should not detract from the scenic quality of the area.

## Cultural Resources

**Relevance** The criteria of cultural resources is contained in the definition of a scenic byway. In addition, it has been incorporated by most states in their list of criteria for identifying a scenic byway. "To preserve and enhance cultural resources" was the fourth most cited criteria (8 states) in the 1990 National Scenic Byways Study (Federal Highway Administration, 1990).

**Definitions** Cultural resources are fragile and nonrenewable remains of human activity and occupation. These remains may be sites, structures, buildings, objects, artifacts, ruins, works of art, architecture, landscapes, or natural features that were important in the course of human events. Cultural resources consist of 1) physical remains, 2) areas where significant human events occurred - even though physical evidence of the event no longer remains, and 3) the environment (landscape) immediately surrounding the actual resource. There are three types of cultural resources: 1) historic, 2) prehistoric, and 3) traditional or sacred.

Prehistoric sites are defined as those which are known to have been used or occupied before written records were kept in an area. In Montana, the boundary between history and prehistory is generally accepted as 1805 when the Lewis and Clark Expedition passed through the State. Sites are generally considered historic if they were used or occupied between 1805 and 1944 (50 years from present). Traditional or sacred Native American sites are localities used for purposes of worship and commemorations.

**Identification** Cultural resources can be identified on a map which shows the route and all historic sites and related facilities. Consideration should be given to how well the cultural resource is identified, the nature of the resource and whether it is accessible from the road. A route that has a number of smaller cultural resource sites, or one major resource site, would be an excellent candidate for a scenic byway. Additionally, the route should be evaluated for potential associated opportunities; for example, an interesting ghost town may exist close to the route, but would require travel on a non-designated route for access.

**Management** Cultural resources are uniquely fragile resources that require special consideration and protection. They can be severely impacted by increased visitation, vandalism,

looting, “arrowhead” collecting, and by inappropriate visual intrusions. Cultural resources can be protected by carefully considering all possible impacts to the identified cultural resources along a nominated route. It should be determined whether designation would increase site visitation. If so, could the site sustain the increase? Finally, the appropriate federal land management agency or the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) should be consulted regarding laws and regulations that pertain to cultural resources and how to monitor and protect them.

## **Scientific/Educational**

**Relevance** Including scientific and educational criteria is a less common approach to scenic byways designation. However, it is an element that is becoming increasingly popular and important in the overall justification for designation. Scientific and educational considerations provide for an awareness of otherwise obscure features.

**Definition** Educational and scientific elements of a scenic byway might include unique design and/or construction features of the route itself, or activities of interest adjacent to or within view of the route. Award winning bridges, design in harmony with nature, nature trails at pullouts, informational loops, and facilities for interpretation of logging or mining activities are all examples of educational and scientific elements of a scenic byway.

**Identification** Identifying educational and scientific opportunities along a potential route can occur at two levels. First, existing facilities or opportunities can be inventoried through maps, local interviews, and windshield surveys. Second, cooperative efforts can be solicited from interested parties to develop educational and scientific elements along a particular route. For example: If a route was being considered for designation, a local nature group could work with the route’s proponent to develop a nature trail from an existing or planned pullout or rest area. Or, a local resource company might be interested in providing an explanation of the company’s activities visible from the road.

**Management** Existing educational and scientific opportunities should be maintained. Consideration should be given to development of new opportunities along candidate and designated routes. Educational or scientific facilities should be constructed to blend with the surrounding environment, and maintained to remain consistent with adjacent improvements. Yearly monitoring of educational or scientific elements should occur to ensure that the original intent remains.

## **Safety and Road Type or Conditions**

### **Safety/Design**

**Relevance** A major concern of many transportation authorities has been the safety of designated byways for motorists and alternative users. Most states establish a need in their program that will ensure all safety and design standards for the particular route are met prior to designation. On routes that don’t meet these standards, programs identify the route as such and provide sufficient warning to motorists.

**Definition** Safety impacts considered by most transportation authorities depend on the ability of the physical features of the road to handle increased activities without

compromising existing levels of safety. Twelve factors are considered when planning for safety assurances:

- o Speed differences (level of service -- chapter 3)
- o Signs (location, size, brightness, lettering)
- o Clear zones (cleared vegetation and debris beyond road edge)
- o Barriers (curbs and guardrails)
- o Pedestrians and bicyclists (interaction in driving lane)
- o Emergency vehicles (adequate access and passing opportunity)
- o Grades (passing lanes, escape ramps)
- o Curves (traffic volumes, sight distance, speed limits)
- o Vehicle restrictions (appropriate vehicle size for terrain and road design)
- o Structures (ability of highway structures to carry increased load -- especially on smaller/older roads)
- o Railroad crossings (advanced warning devices with increased traffic)

Most of the above safety and design considerations are addressed by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). AASHTO has set requirements for such factors as clear zones, curves, and grades that vary depending on the classification of the route. Many National Highway System (NHS), State Primary, and State Secondary routes comply with AASHTO standards. However some, such as most local and county roads, especially gravel improved, do not meet these standards.

**Identification** Safety and design information for many routes would be available from the Department of Transportation. Other routes that are being considered for designation should be inventoried and the design and safety standards discussed with the appropriate jurisdiction.

**Management** Routes must be continually monitored for use changes, accident ratios, level of service ratings, and physical conditions of the road surface and facilities. Routes that exhibit an increase in any of these areas must be evaluated in greater depth, and a decision made to alleviate the problem.

## Road Types/Conditions

**Relevance** Road types and conditions are often considered with safety and design criteria. Road types and conditions are relevant to the byways process because 1) it helps define what types of vehicles can travel on the designated route, 2) what conditions can be expected by the motorist, and 3) when the route is safest to travel.

**Definition** Road type and conditions are often defined in the following criteria:

- o Route must be an existing road.
- o At a minimum, route must be paved with an identifiable shoulder.
- o Route must be improved gravel (backway).
- o Route must accommodate two-wheel-drive automobiles and all recreational vehicles.
- o Requires four-wheel-drive or high clearance vehicle (backways).

- o Route is safe for prescribed type of vehicle use.
- o Route must be open year round.
- o Route requires four-wheel-drive and/or chain in inclement weather (backway).
- o Route must be level-of-service C or above.

**Identification** Information of road types and conditions is available from the Department or other jurisdiction. From this information, data is available for determining what size vehicles the route can handle, the seasonality of the route, and its existing level of service. This information would be necessary prior to designation.

**Management** Collection of baseline data for each designated route is very important in monitoring the impacts of designation on a given route. If no baseline exists, the route must be monitored annually, and baseline data collected to begin tracking the performance and condition of the route following designation.

### Roadway Character

#### **Character and Continuity**

**Relevance** Roadway character helps define the transportation element of the designated byway. Why do people travel the route? Many states feel that motorists travel on scenic byways because of the organized structure of the opportunities along the route as brought out by the designation process. Yet others maintain that byways are used merely as an alternative means of getting from one point to the next.

Continuity is often considered by states to be vitally important in the designation of a route as a scenic byway. These states typically require the route to be continuous from beginning to end in order to keep its natural flow.

**Definition** The criteria for character of the route is defined in the following manner:

- o The route could be a destination in and of itself. This type of route would typically be so abundant with scenic, recreational, educational, historic, and natural wonders that the motorist, travelling its length, could be provided with enough opportunity to spend a number of days along the route.
- o The route serves as a connecting link -- offering scenic, recreational, educational, historic, and natural opportunities -- between points of interest not located on the route. This type of route is typically shorter, or less abundant with the aforementioned elements, but still provides a spectacular journey for the motorist.

The criteria for continuity of the route is defined in the following manner:

- o A route must be continuous from beginning to end -- with no breaks due to non-conforming land uses, urban centers or intermittent changes in route type (e.g., State Secondary route combining with Interstate for a few miles before continuing as a Secondary). If these breaks are identified, they must be incorporated appropriately.

- o A route must not be designated as scenic through large areas of non-conforming land uses, urban centers, or intermittent changes in route type. The route may extend beyond these areas, with signs identifying the route as a designated scenic byway. For example: A one hundred mile stretch of road may have three communities and two industrial parks along the route. Although this route would be considered one scenic byway, signing would denote the intermittent changes in designation.

**Identification** Identifying the character and continuity of candidate routes would be conducted following the identification of other criteria and their elements. If character and continuity were selected as criteria, they would be one of the last to be considered in the designation process.

**Management** Management of the character and continuity of the designated route would consist of the annual reviews or monitoring events. Primary considerations are given to the number of conforming attractions or elements that defined the route as scenic. Additionally, the route should be inventoried for changes in non-conforming uses and urban sprawl to ensure that signing is still appropriately located and that the original continuity element is being met.

**Identifiable beginning and end point** - Beginning and end points are components of the roadway as a whole, including its length and continuity. Generally, the need for clear beginning and end points does not rate among any state's criteria for designation because these can frequently be identified with a sign. However, it is an attractive feature to have clearly identifiable beginning and end points for a route. For example: The route may begin in a historic town center and may end at a beautiful lake, or alternatively, it may link several town centers, or again, make a loop back to the starting point.

## Alternative Uses

**Relevance** Alternative uses of the route are also considered when determining the character of a route. Many states include the route's ability to handle alternative uses as important criteria when considering designation. Implementation of alternative uses provides for an expansion of recreational, scenic, historic, educational, and natural opportunities along the route. Many states feel that roadways are an alternative means by which the elements can be enjoyed at a slower pace without disrupting traffic flows (e.g., routes that have established bike paths).

**Definition** Alternative uses are defined by the following four categories in Montana:

- o Bicycling, horses, etc.
- o Pedestrian -- walking/running
- o Unlicensed vehicles -- four wheelers, snowmobiles, trail bikes, etc.

**Identification** Identifying opportunities for alternative uses when considering a route for designation, includes an inventory of existing facilities and a review of available or proposed funding for the facility's development. When considering existing road surfaces for pedestrian or bike paths, there must be sufficient shoulder space for development of the path. If considering construction of new paths, the Department must decide whether to place the path adjacent to, or separate from, the highway -- and whether the funding is in place to conduct the work.

**Management** Management of the alternative use facility must be maintained. Annual monitoring must consider usage and traffic volumes on both the highway route and the path, as well as the condition of each.

## Signing

**Relevance** Signs are components of the overall quality of the built environment, scenic quality, or land use. However, because signs have such a strong impact on roadways, they are discussed independently. Signs can have both positive and negative impacts on scenic routes. Many states require signing of a route that is designated as a scenic byway, and a special sign is provided for that purpose (chapter 3). Directional signs help to orient a motorist, while interpretive signs enhance the user's experience on the route. Billboards, however, are considered unsightly on scenic routes, and some states disqualify roadways with too many unsightly signs or billboards.

**Definitions** The National Park Service describes different types of signs for roads. These are: traffic control signs, directional/informational/interpretative signs, wayside exhibits, and symbol signs. Most scenic byways programs have either their own logos, or identification signs. The U.S. Forest Service and BLM also have identification signs for scenic byways. A billboard is defined as "an off-premise sign, a flat surface on which bills are posted, or a large panel designed to carry outdoor advertising." The Federal Highway Beautification Act allows communities to ban the erection of new billboards, or to control new or existing billboards to a certain extent.

**Identification** The route should be analyzed, and the number and location of signs should be documented in terms of undesirable signs and useful signs, in order to assess the impact of signs on the route.

**Management** Scenic byway identification signs are appropriate to mark routes. These may include mileage markers, or other information of interest to the motorist. An effort should be made to coordinate signage along the route, and wherever possible, signs should be consolidated in a standard format. Ideally, new billboards should not be permitted along scenic byways. If a route is too severely impacted by undesirable signage, it may be ineligible for designation, or may be de-designated.

## Local Commitment of Resources

### Resource Commitments

**Relevance** Local commitments of resources are considered by most states to be a paramount element in the success of individual byways and overall scenic byways programs. Support at the local "grass roots" level is often the key to implementing successful protection measures and monitoring the status of the designated route. Identifying local funding sources is also becoming a popular means to achieving a more viable byway through the region.

**Definition** Local resources can come in one or a combination of the following forms:

- o Financial resources provide funding for local facilities or oversight services. Although no construction or highway improvement can be directly funded and carried out by local community members, they can be channelled through the city or county government. In some cases, these funds could be combined with CTEP funds to further enhance byways facilities.
- o Human resources, or volunteers, are a common means by which oversight and some maintenance can be achieved. Monitoring the route is a key component in the continued success of a byways program. Additionally, simple maintenance projects, such as replacing trash bags and picking up trash along the route, are helpful to the overall success and intent of the route.
- o Local commitment of physical resources includes such items as: interpretative signs, picnic tables, trash cans, etc. These resources can be incorporated into the byway through a coordinated effort with the local jurisdiction, MDT and the District Engineer.

Other physical resources could include promotional materials for individual routes, including localized route maps, interpretative guides, and/or news releases.

**Identification** Commitments of local resources will usually be identified during the early phases of a route's candidacy. In fact, most applications for designation will be a result of a local effort. Organized efforts usually offer an element of guaranteed support. Typically this support is in the form of monitoring and the minimal maintenance as identified above. However, commitments can be made that identify an effort towards fund raising and volunteer work.

**Management** Management of local resource commitments would come primarily from MDT's scenic byways planner. Approval for monitoring, fund raising, and minimal maintenance work would be required by the Department in coordination with the District Engineer and the local jurisdiction (city or county).

### Compatibility

#### **Compatibility**

**Relevance** The types and development pattern of land use adjacent to a route are important considerations in scenic byway designation. If the area is in a relatively natural condition, natural features may comprise the majority of the area. However, many routes pass through rural, suburban, or urban areas where the types of land use may not be those typically considered as positive contributors to the quality of a scenic route. Nevertheless, areas of historic and cultural importance and well designed or characteristic urban development can add another dimension to the experience of a scenic route. One of the most important aspects to consider is whether undesirable types of land use may, in time, encroach on existing pristine roadsides. How then can the property owner's rights be balanced with the public good realized by designation of the route as a scenic byway? Six criteria are often discussed when considering compatibility:

- o Is the development along the route consistent with the scenic corridor -- including the control of outdoor advertising?
- o Does designation provide for a balance between private property rights and the public interest?
- o Is the corridor management consistent with federal, state, local and other land use/management plans?
- o Is the route compatible with recreational, aesthetic and management needs of area?
- o Are the levels of protection greatest in areas of high intrinsic value?
- o Does designation demonstrate a minimization of intrusion on the visitor experience?

**Definition** Land use is defined as “various human activities which impact the landscape in a variety of ways. Examples of land use types are: industrial, commercial, residential, agricultural, recreational, and undeveloped.”

Land use issues may be divided into five categories:

- o Uses and development pattern
- o Ownership - public and private property
- o Zoning and land use regulations
- o Proposed developments
- o Communities

**Identification** It is important to identify existing types and patterns of land use along the scenic route and to establish which types enhance or detract from the quality of experience of the route. Sometimes it takes only one or two inappropriate major developments to ruin the character of an otherwise scenic road segment. Another problem is uncontrolled sprawl of undesirable land use types. In addition to identifying what presently exists, it is important to review land use and zoning plans, as well as proposed development projects for the area, in order to identify the types of use that may occur in the future. Finally, an inventory of existing land use and land ownership, in terms of public and private land, will assist in identifying protected and developable land.

**Management** There are many methods to control land use (chapter 2). The first task is to develop a corridor management plan for the route. Second, coordinate with local agencies and public groups (e.g., Public Land Trust) to discover if any protective measures already exist. Some simple tools that may be considered are: scenic or conservation easements, or acquisition of key land parcels.

### Management/Protection

### **Corridor Management Plan**

**Relevance** The existence of a corridor management plan -- whether programmatic with route specific management plans, or simply the latter -- is the primary tool in preserving and protecting the criteria elements that determined a route's designation. Most states with scenic byways programs have developed, or are in the process of developing, corridor management plans. Each state interviewed as part of this investigation acknowledged the importance of corridor management plans. Of particular interest was the plan's role in establishing the future management direction of the route -- including monitoring and protection measures, as well as coordination efforts with short term and long term highway construction plans.

**Definition** A corridor management plan is effectively described in Wyoming's Draft Scenic Byways and Backways Program as follows:

- o "To help ensure the success of a designated route, it is essential that a corridor management plan be developed following the route's designation." The corridor management plan provides a detailed plan for the successful transformation of the roadway, from simply a transportation route to its development as a scenic byway or backway, and subsequently for its successful management. In order to accomplish this transformation smoothly, it is necessary to address various aspects of the route's resources, development, marketing, organization, funding, protection, and implementation in more detail than was done in the route's application process. A properly prepared conceptual plan (application phase) will provide the overall organizational structure within which to fully develop the corridor management plan. It is vitally important that the Department provide the necessary technical support to the local sponsoring groups.

**Identification** As a criterion, development of a corridor management plan is a rather cut-and-dried request -- a corridor management plan must be prepared. However, in the contents of the corridor management plan, the details may be built into the criterion. The following should be considered important components of both the programmatic and route specific corridor management plans.

- o Identification and evaluation of byway/backway resources (i.e., natural resources; cultural resources; visual resources; recreation resources; educational resources; hospitality resources; attractions/entertainment; land use; access; institutional, organizational, and individual resources; environmental hazard and sensitive areas).
- o Development/interpretation/protection of resources and infrastructure (i.e., enhancement to the quality of the resource and infrastructure, interpretation program, monitoring and protection, maintenance program).
- o Marketing and promotion (i.e., identify markets, establish general marketing strategy and techniques, establish a promotion program).
- o Organization and management (i.e. form and structure of byway organization; types and sources of support to implement plan; identification of required services).
- o Funding and financing (i.e., types and sources of funding to implement strategies, budget/funding program, fund leveraging, financial projections).

- o Implementation strategies (i.e., resources and infrastructure strategy; development, interpretation and protection strategy; marketing and promotion strategy; organization and management strategy; funding and financing strategy; scheduling strategy; maintenance strategy).
- o Evaluation and monitoring (i.e., review progress relative to theme/mission statement/goals and objectives, review progress relative to each strategy).

**Management** Monitoring of the corridor management plan and its contents is conducted annually by reviewing the route's progress relative to the plan's theme, mission statement, goals and objectives, and individual strategies. Failure to meet any of these indicate that more attention must be given to the route to ensure its long-term viability.

## Environmental Assessment

**Relevance** Environmental Assessments are rapidly becoming a major part of the designation process in many states. Proposed projects requiring federal funds or federal lands or involvement of any federal agency must satisfy the National Environmental Policy Act either through the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA), Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Categorical Exclusion (CE).

**Definition** An Environmental Assessment is generally prepared in order to determine the proposed project's significance on the human environment. If the assessment determines that the impacts associated with the project could reach an unacceptable level of significance, then an Environmental Impact Statement must be prepared.

**Identification** The level of environmental impact analysis can be determined at two levels. Often, a programmatic EIS is prepared on the entire byways program. It would not typically address specific routes, but rather, consider each resource area (cultural, wildlife, vegetation, etc.) in general and identify the range of environmental impacts that could be associated with any given number of projects -- either individually or cumulatively. Then, as individual routes are considered for designation, an EA that tiers from the programmatic EIS would be all that is necessary.

The second level of analysis for compliance with state and federal environmental policy acts is to prepare a full EA for each route. This would require reevaluation of each resource on a route specific basis.

**Management** Management and preparation of the Environmental Assessments comes from the Department, but would typically be funded through the project proponent. If a proposed project simply involved the placement of signs along the route, a minimal effort would be required -- possibly through a checklist EA process. However, if a proposed project included plans for clearing land associated with facility development, then an EA or EIS could be necessary.

## Other Criteria Available for Consideration

- o Sufficient land area for facilities
- o Minimum length of one mile
- o Service to major population centers
- o Harmony with other highway users

- o Availability and compatibility of existing facilities
- o Public demand
- o Loop capabilities
- o Location and distribution across the State
- o The enhancement of tourist distribution
- o Existing usage densities
- o Establishing that no major improvements are scheduled that would change character

## DESIGNATION STRATEGIES

Different methods are used across the nation to designate specific routes as scenic byways or backways. The following list introduces for discussion the various methods available for nominating or beginning the designation process for specific routes. Discussion of these strategies were discussed at the third Advisory Committee meeting and presented in Chapter 5.

### 1. Develop Master Plan

- o Matrix or inventory process whereby the Department inventories all routes as per the criteria developed in this investigation. All the routes that meet the criteria would be eligible for designation upon request through an application or petition process as described below.

### 2. Statewide Solicitation

- o Statewide press release with mapping exercise and identification of favorite routes.
- o Statewide public meetings with presentation and public comment.

### 3. Application/Petition

- o Notice provided through the press and public service announcement that MDT is accepting applications for designation of routes. Scenic byways planner works with applicant to prepare application and conceptual management plan.

## OVERSIGHT ALTERNATIVES

The following section briefly introduces the general alternatives available for administering the oversight of the individual scenic byways. Oversight is necessary to ensure that the route continues its eligibility as a designated scenic byway. Although overall program oversight will be administered through the Department, route specific oversight can occur at any of the levels identified below. The chosen oversight body would be responsible for preparing annual reports to the Department identifying areas of concern and recommendations for additional designation or de-designation. Discussion of these alternatives were discussed at the third Advisory Committee meeting and presented in Chapter 5.

### 1. Montana Department of Transportation

- o District engineers
- o Scenic byways planning staff (Helena)

### 2. Scenic Byways Advisory Committee

- o Entire committee
- o Entire committee split by respective regions
- o Development of subcommittee

### 3. Oversight Committee

- o Program-wide oversight committee
- o Route-specific oversight committee

#### 4. Local Governments

- o County government
- o City government

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING RESULTS

The Advisory Committee met at 10:00 AM at the Park Plaza Hotel in Helena on March 25, 1994 to discuss and provide recommendations on the information presented above. The meeting opened with introductions, a review of the agenda, and a brief discussion of participant roles and the process for criteria review.

#### 1. Structure of a Byways System

*Question:* Should a Montana scenic byways system, if implemented, be regional in nature or a unified statewide system?

*Discussion:* The Committee discussed the merits of allocating byways based on regions, but felt a regional system would bear an inherent number of problems including: 1) multiple jurisdictions, 2) equitable distribution, 3) potential lack of regional resources, and 4) pressure to honor poor or mediocre applications.

*Recommendation:* The Advisory Committee unanimously agreed that Montana scenic byways should be based on a statewide plan.

#### 2. Tiering

*Question:* Should a Montana scenic byways system, if implemented, be a single-tier system or a multi-tiered system?

*Discussion:* 1) A two-tiered system would include a byways system and a backways system. A two-tiered system would enable Montana to develop high quality scenic byways and also allow for inclusion of smaller back country roads that exist in the more rural parts of the State.

2) A two-tiered system would be more beneficial for eastern Montana because of the limited number of highways in that area of the State.

3) In Montana there may well be a stronger interest in back country roads. Tourism trends reflect that non-resident travelers like to explore rural areas.

4) Concerns were expressed about conflicts with agricultural landholders who utilize the back roads regularly. Reports from other states indicate this has not been problematic. In fact, back country roads provide an opportunity for travelers to learn more about and become more aware of the agricultural industry.

5) There was discussion about adding a third tier for non-vehicle use by bicyclists and recreationists. It was noted that since Fish, Wildlife and Parks already maintains a network of trails, that backways routes should (if applicable) interface with trail programs. It was also indicated that it is difficult to procure government funding for trails. Although CTEP money is available for counties and municipalities, it bears restrictions.

6) There were concerns about bicyclist safety. It was felt that byways routes with high traffic volumes were more of a problem than back country roads with low traffic volumes.

7) It was felt important that no program be mandatory since counties are struggling with their own financial issues. Counties must be able to have the choice of supporting or not supporting a scenic byways or backways route in their jurisdictional area. It was noted that the application process would require a strong commitment from local residents and county commissioners.

*Recommendation:* Committee members unanimously agreed to recommend a "tiered" program that would include byways and backways systems and with the flexibility to create additional tiers if appropriate.

### 3. System Expanse

*Question:* How should the Department of Transportation determine the number of miles or the number of byways/backways to be designated?

*Discussion:* 1) If scenic byways/backways are based on economic development benefits and not intrinsic values, the quality of the program may suffer.

2) Stringent criteria should drive the process, not mile allotments. If miles become the competing factor, noteworthy routes may be eliminated.

3) The extensive nature of the application process and required local commitment will allow the cream of the crop to surface.

4) Access should be a consideration in the application or criteria process. Travelers must be able to easily access the byways/backways from a primary or secondary road.

5) Criteria, other than scenery that should be considered as important components of scenic byways/backways systems include historical, scientific, and geological significance. It will be important to stress that areas rich in one or more of these components are eligible for designation nomination.

6) Entities responsible for maintenance of the road should have veto capability.

*Recommendation:* Committee members unanimously agreed that criteria should drive the scenic byways/backways designation process.

### 4. Route Distribution

*Question:* If, by basing distribution on criteria, the Department of Transportation should get too many acceptable applications, what method would be most acceptable to determine distribution?

*Discussion:* The Committee discussed the potential of large numbers of equally competitive applications being submitted. Members felt this possibility exists and there should, indeed, be a process to ensure equitable distribution.

*Recommendation:* The Committee agreed that if there are numerous equally competitive applications based on criteria, they should be screened by a geographically balanced selection committee. The committee could be based on nominations made by the Advisory Committee.

## 5. Designation Criteria

**Question:** What criteria should be considered for designation of scenic byways?

**Discussion:** Advisory Committee members were asked to prioritize designation criteria by rating the listed criteria high, medium, or low. They were also asked to add to the list any criteria they felt should be considered. Total tallies fluctuated because of absentia votes. The voting tabulations follow, listed in resultant priority order.

### **Intrinsic Values:**

Elements	H	M	L
o Cultural & historic landmarks	13	2	0
o Unusual geological formations	12	2	0
o Outstanding mountains, foothills, and desert scenes	11	4	0
o Streams, lakes, wetlands	6	5	0
o Prairie, cactus, & wildflower areas	5	7	3
o Exceptional pastoral views	0	6	9

To protect the integrity of the Program the committee agreed that at least one of the above elements should be present in applications. They also felt that a route theme approach is important to help nominees focus their efforts, avoid a hodge-podge approach, guide interpreters, and assist development of effective marketing campaigns.

**Recommendation:** The group agreed that the following statement should set the parameters of the nomination process: Each route nominated must possess one of the following outstanding thematic qualities: 1) scenic/visual; 2) scientific/educational; 3) historic/cultural; 4) natural features; and 5) recreational opportunities.

### **Safety and Road Type Conditions**

The Advisory Committee voted on whether certain criteria should be an absolute requirement (A) or a consideration (C). Criteria rated (C) was then priority ranked High, Medium, or Low.

Byways Elements	A	C	H	M	L
o Must be an existing road.				16	
o Road should have an identifiable shoulder.	16				
o Must safely accommodate traffic volumes.	11	4			
o Must be paved w/identifiable shoulder.	10	6			
o Must accommodate two-wheel drive, including all RV units.	2	14	12	4	0
o Route must meet all AASHTO standards.	0	16	1	11	2
o Route must be service level C or above.	0	16	0	15	1
o Route must be open year round.	0	16	0	4	12

Backways Elements	A	C	H	M	L
o Must be an existing road.	16				
o Must safely accommodate traffic volumes.	11	4			
o Must be classified as improved gravel.	1	14	9	5	0

- |                                                     |   |    |   |    |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---|----|---|----|----|
| o Route must be open year round.                    | 0 | 16 | 0 | 12 | 0  |
| o Route requires 4-wheel or high clearance vehicle. | 0 | 16 | 0 | 5  | 11 |

## Roadway Character

All criteria in this section were rated as considerations (C).

### Byways Elements

H M L

- |                                                                          |    |    |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|---|
| o Must have minimum length requirement.                                  | 12 | 2  | 0 |
| o Must have identifiable beginning and end points.                       | 11 | 1  | 0 |
| o Must be visually & physically accessible, inc. elderly & handicapped.  | 10 | 6  | 0 |
| o Route should not have gaps. Should be as continuous as possible.       | 10 | 2  | 0 |
| o Existing signing should not detract.                                   | 8  | 4  | 0 |
| o Route should be a link between existing & proposed points of interest. | 3  | 9  | 3 |
| o Route should accommodate alternative usage wherever feasible.          | 3  | 5  | 2 |
| o Route should be a destination in itself.                               | 0  | 11 | 4 |
| o Route should include, when possible, complementary facilities.         | 0  | 4  | 7 |

### Backways Elements

H M L

- |                                                                            |    |   |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|---|----|
| o Route must have minimum length requirement.                              | 12 | 0 | 0  |
| o Route must have identifiable beginning and end points.                   | 10 | 2 | 0  |
| o Existing signing should not detract.                                     | 6  | 3 | 2  |
| o Signing of existing designated routes must consolidate w/byways signing. | 6  | 2 | 3  |
| o Route should be a link between existing and proposed pts. of interest.   | 1  | 5 | 10 |
| o Route should be a destination in itself.                                 | 1  | 4 | 11 |
| o Route should not have too many gaps but be as continuous as possible.    | 0  | 9 | 3  |
| o Route should accommodate alternative usage wherever feasible.            | 0  | 3 | 8  |
| o Route should be visually & physically accessible, elderly & handicapped. | 0  | 3 | 12 |
| o Route should include, when possible, complementary facilities.           | 0  | 0 | 16 |

## Local Commitment of Resources

**Recommendation:** The Advisory Committee unanimously agreed on the following absolute requirement: Routes must have strong local support and commitment to a scenic byways and backways designation, continuing advocacy and commitment by the majority of agencies and landowners with jurisdiction along the proposed route.

## Compatibility

**Discussion:** 1) There needs to be some type of commitment to protect the values (established in the criteria process) by county officials.

2) Should not exclude byways if not zoned. What if only one small strip refused zoning? Zoning is a very controversial issue at this time in Montana. Montanans tend to be opposed to zoning, but many new residents are familiar with zoning and have no problem with it.

3) If a scenic byways program is implemented, it will be necessary to have a great deal of public input so people fully understand what a byway route could mean to their area.

4) There may be a great deal of difficulty getting multiple counties along a route to agree. Do we really want to eliminate a plan if not all counties commit? Should the majority of the counties involved concur?

5) Is there potential for a plan exclusive of zoning?

*Recommendations:* 1) Advisory Committee agreed unanimously that designation consideration should include a balance between private property rights and the public interest through such tools as a county corridor plan.

2) Members agreed that existing land use adjacent to the route should be compatible with scenic byways objectives (including outdoor advertising). Nine members rated it a high consideration, two ranked it medium.

3) The Advisory Committee unanimously agreed it should be an absolute requirement that corridor management plans must be consistent with federal, state, local and other land use/management plans.

### Management/Protection

*Recommendations:* 1) A corridor management plan must accompany each nomination.

2) The levels of corridor protection will be highest through areas of greatest intrinsic value. Such areas must be indicated in the corridor management plan.

3) A corridor management plan must demonstrate that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible and include a plan for making improvements to attract travelers.

4) A corridor management plan must contain a viable marketing strategy describing various measures planned to attract travelers.

### Other Criteria

The Advisory Committee assigned the following ratings to "Other Criteria."

Element	H	M	L
o No major improvements scheduled that would change character	10	0	0
o Harmony w/other highway projects	9	0	0
o Sufficient land area for facilities	8	3	0
o Public demand	6	5	0
o Availability & compatibility of existing facilities	0	8	3
o Location & distribution across state	0	7	4
o Enhances tourist distribution	0	7	4
o Loop capabilities	0	0	9
o Service to major population centers	0	1	11

Because of time constraints, not all items on the agenda were discussed. Designation strategies and oversight alternatives were postponed until the next meeting on May 26, 1994, in Helena.

## PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS -- Designation Criteria

The recommended Montana scenic byways system would, if implemented, be a statewide, tiered system including potential for both byways and backways. There would be no limitation on the number of byways/backways nor the number of designated miles. However, strict adherence to criteria guidelines and close scrutiny of applications would be required to ensure a quality rather than quantity oriented program. Designation would be accomplished through a nomination/application process based on criteria which has been weighed according to the importance given to it by the statewide Scenic Byways Advisory Committee. In the case of large numbers of equally competitive applications, applications would be screened by a geographically balanced statewide selection committee formed through a nomination process by the Advisory Committee and others.

If an applicant seeks ultimate byways designation at the national level, a greater number of absolute criteria must be met as identified below. If an applicant only seeks designation under the State Program, fewer absolute criteria are required, but the option exists for consideration under the National Program if it also happens to meet those criteria as well.

### Absolute Requirements for National Scenic Byways Nomination

If the proponent sought designation under the National Scenic Byways Program the following criteria would be required:

- 1) Route must meet criteria for user safety, user facilities, and local and state plans to maintain the intrinsic values of the corridor through which it passes.
- 2) Route must safely and conveniently accommodate two-wheel-drive automobiles with standard clearances.
- 3) Route must safely and conveniently accommodate, where feasible, bicycle and pedestrian travel.
- 4) Route should be as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
- 5) Corridor management plan must show strong evidence of local support, and continuing advocacy and commitment to the designation of a highway as a scenic byway.
- 6) Route must demonstrate a practical balance between private property rights and the public interest through such tools as land use zoning, conveyance of easements, and economic incentives.
- 7) A corridor management plan must accompany each nomination. Plan must demonstrate how the byway will be operated and managed, how corridor preservation and enhancement will be implemented, and include a map and inventory of existing and planned development.
- 8) Corridor management plan must demonstrate that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and include a plan for making improvements to enhance that experience.
- 9) Corridor management plan must provide an indication that the levels of corridor protection will be highest through areas of greatest intrinsic value.

- 10) Corridor management plan must contain a viable marketing plan describing various measures that would be taken to attract travelers.

### Absolute Requirements for State Scenic Byways Nomination

If the proponent sought designation under the State Scenic Byways Program only, the following criteria would be required:

- 1) Each route nominated must possess one of the following thematic outstanding qualities: 1) scenic/visual; 2) scientific/educational; 3) historic/cultural; 4) natural features; or 5) recreational opportunities.
- 2) Only existing roads that can safely accommodate expected traffic volumes will be considered for either a scenic byway or backway. Nominated byways (only) must be paved with an identifiable shoulder.
- 3) All nominated routes must have strong local support and commitment to a scenic byways and backways designation, continuing advocacy and a commitment by the majority of agencies and landowners with jurisdiction along the proposed route.
- 4) A corridor management plan consistent with federal, state, tribal, local and other land use/management plans must accompany each nomination.

### Specific Criteria (non-absolute) to be Considered for Route Nominations

Whether applying for state designation or ultimate designation under the National Program, the applicant should consider incorporation of other criteria in the proposal to further justify the route's eligibility. The following elements or criteria would also be considered in the application review process.

Each application for route designation would be evaluated based on how well it meets the absolute requirements identified above and the specific criteria summarized below. The following criteria are not requirements, rather, they are considerations, listed in order of priority, as determined by the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee.

#### **Intrinsic Values**

- o Cultural and historic landmarks
- o Unusual geological formations
- o Outstanding mountains, foothills, & desert scenes
- o Streams, lakes, wetlands
- o Prairie, cactus, & wildflower areas
- o Exceptional pastoral views

#### **Safety and Road Type Conditions**

##### **Byways**

- o Route accommodates two-wheel drive, including all RV units.
- o Route meets all AASHTO standards.
- o Route is service level C or above.
- o Route is open year round.

**Backways**

- ☐ Route is classified as improved gravel.
- ☐ Route is open year round.
- ☐ Route requires 4-wheel or high clearance vehicle.

**Roadway Character****Byways**

- ☐ Route has minimum length requirement.
- ☐ Route has identifiable beginning and end points.
- ☐ Route is visually and physically accessible for elderly and handicapped.
- ☐ Route is as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
- ☐ Existing signing does not detract.
- ☐ Route is connecting link between existing and proposed points of interest.
- ☐ Route accommodates alternative usage.
- ☐ Route is destination in itself.
- ☐ Route includes complementary facilities.

**Backways**

- ☐ Route has minimum length requirement.
- ☐ Route has identifiable beginning and end points.
- ☐ Existing signing does not detract.
- ☐ Signing of existing route consolidates w/byways signing.
- ☐ Route is as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
- ☐ Route is connecting link between existing and proposed points of interest.
- ☐ Route is a destination in itself.
- ☐ Route accommodates alternative usage.
- ☐ Route includes complementary facilities.

**Local Commitment of Resources**

(all absolute criteria)

**Compatibility**

- ☐ There is a balance between private property rights and the public interest.
- ☐ Existing land use adjacent to the route is compatible with scenic byway objectives.

**Management/Protection**

- ☐ A corridor management plan must accompany each nomination.
- ☐ Levels of corridor protection is highest through areas of highest intrinsic value.
- ☐ Corridor management plan demonstrates that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible and include a plan for making improvements to attract travelers.
- ☐ Corridor management plan contains a viable marketing strategy describing various measures planned to attract travelers.

**Other**

- ☐ No major improvements scheduled that would change character.
- ☐ Project is in harmony w/other highway projects.
- ☐ Sufficient land area for facilities.

- o Public demand.
- o Availability and compatibility of existing facilities.
- o Location and distribution across the State.
- o Enhances tourist distribution.
- o Service to major population centers.
- o Loop capabilities.

### Criteria Weighting

The following formula is based on the results of the second Advisory Committee meeting and is used for weighting non-absolute criteria and ultimate ranking of applications. The application review committee would use this formula and the resultant weights to prioritize the applications in terms of meeting the non-absolute criteria recommendations.

All criteria rated as H, 20 pts.  
Majority criteria rated as H, remainder M, 18 pts.  
Majority criteria rated as M, remainder H, 15 pts.  
All criteria rated as M, 12 pts.  
Majority criteria rated as M, remainder L, 10 pts.  
Majority criteria rated as L, remainder M, 5 pts.  
All criteria rated as L, 2 pts.)

### **Intrinsic Values**

#### **Byways and Backways**

18 pts. Cultural and historic landmarks  
18 pts. Unusual geological formations  
18 pts. Outstanding mountains, foothills, & desert scenes  
15 pts. Streams, lakes, wetlands  
15 pts. Prairie, cactus, & wildflower areas  
10 pts. Exceptional pastoral views

### **Safety and Road Type Conditions**

#### **Byways**

18 pts. Accommodates two-wheel drive, including all RV units.  
15 pts. Meets all AASHTO standards.  
12 pts. Route is service level "C" or above.  
5 pts. Route open year round.

#### **Backways**

18 pts. Route is classified as improved gravel.  
12 pts. Route is open year round.  
5 pts. Route requires 4-wheel or high clearance vehicle.

### **Roadway Character**

#### **Byways**

18 pts. Route has minimum length requirement.  
18 pts. Route has identifiable beginning and end points.  
18 pts. Is visually and physically accessible for elderly and handicapped.

- 18 pts. Route is as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
- 18 pts. Existing signing does not detract.
- 12 pts. Is connecting link between existing and proposed points of interest.
- 12 pts. Route accommodates alternative usage.
- 10 pts. Route is destination in itself.
- 5 pts. Route includes complementary facilities.

#### Backways

- 18 pts. Route has minimum length requirement.
- 18 pts. Route has identifiable beginning and end points.
- 15 pts. Existing signing does not detract.
- 15 pts. Signing of existing route consolidates w/byways signing.
- 12 pts. Route is as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
- 10 pts. Route is connecting link between existing and proposed points of interest.
- 5 pts. Route is a destination in itself.
- 5 pts. Route accommodates alternative usage.
- 2 pts. Route includes complementary facilities.

#### Local Commitment of Resources

(all absolute criteria)

#### Compatibility

- 18 pts. There is a balance between private property rights and the public interest.
- 18 pts. Existing land use adjacent to the route should be compatible with SB objectives.

#### Management/Protection

- 18 pts. A corridor management plan accompanies each nomination.
- 18 pts. Levels of corridor protection will be highest through areas of highest intrinsic value.
- 18 pts. Corridor management plan demonstrates that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible and include a plan for making improvements to attract travelers.
- 18 pts. Corridor management plan contains a viable marketing strategy describing various measures planned to attract travelers.

#### Other

- 20 pts. No major improvements scheduled that would change character
- 20 pts. In harmony w/other highway projects
- 18 pts. Sufficient land area for facilities
- 18 pts. Public demand
- 10 pts. Availability and compatibility of existing facilities
- 10 pts. Location and distribution across the state
- 10 pts. Enhances tourist distribution
- 5 pts. Service to major population centers
- 2 pts. Loop capabilities

Recommendations for designation strategies and oversight alternatives will be discussed and results presented in chapter 5. .

## CHAPTER 5

### PROGRAM MISSION AND ALTERNATIVES

#### TASK DESCRIPTION

The information and recommendations presented in Chapter 5 are the culmination of the data gathering and analyses efforts in chapters 1-4. Chapter 5 introduces the directional element necessary for making recommendations concerning the need and type of byways program appropriate for the State of Montana. It proposes a program mission statement, goals, and supporting objectives for consideration by the Department and the Advisory Committee. This chapter also assembles the alternatives presented in previous chapters, and details a recommended program alternative based on the comparative analyses conducted to date.

Components of the recommended program are visually represented through computer simulations. This effort allows the Advisory Committee and department personnel to envision the components of the alternatives based on realistic visual demonstration.

Alternatives for sign and logo designs are presented for consideration by the Advisory Committee and department personnel. Similarly, alternative names for the potential program will be considered by the Advisory Committee.

Coordination efforts with other agencies, states, and tribal governments identify the necessary cooperative efforts for management, maintenance, funding, and signing of a scenic byways program in Montana. Finally, the framework for a preliminary byways user guide is presented for possible use in the program.

#### CONCEPTUAL SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM -- MISSION, GOAL, AND OBJECTIVES

##### Mission

The following mission statement incorporates the general principles of the National Scenic Byways Advisory Committee Report and establishes an overall directive from which to govern a Montana scenic byways program.

**Mission:** *Provide all Montanans and guests to the State a quality-oriented system of scenic byways and backways, and ensure the long-term benefits, enjoyment, enhancement, and preservation of the intrinsic values which define their designation, while respecting the integrity of Montana's transportation system.*

Although many criteria must be met for a route to be eligible for consideration as a byway, intrinsic values serve as the foundation of the designation process. The following goals and objectives have been established to further support the intent of the program's mission:

- Goals**
- o Expand the travelling public's awareness of Montana's superb scenic, cultural, historic, recreational, and educational resources.*
  - o Protect and enhance the scenic, cultural, historic, recreational, and educational assets within the byways and backways corridors.*

- o *Provide alternative opportunities to experience Montana.*
  - o *Ensure compatibility with other important activities on Montana's transportation system.*
  - o *Promote and enhance tourism in Montana.*
- Objectives
- o *Develop a quality-oriented scenic byways/backways program based on adherence to the mission, goals, and criteria set for designation eligibility.*
  - o *Encourage proactive, local involvement in the application, planning, management, and commitment to scenic byways.*
  - o *Require route specific corridor management plans. (To guide applicants through the process of corridor planning, a detailed procedures manual would be developed. The manual would address the public involvement process, securing support from jurisdictional entities, marketing, goals and objectives, etc.)*
  - o *Develop an active promotion strategy, and continue a statewide, public awareness campaign.*

## PROGRAM ALTERNATIVES

Preparation of program alternatives is based on a customization of program components. As discussed throughout Chapters 1-4, there are a variety of components that would be associated with a potential program (i.e., program scope, signing, administration, funding, facilities, promotion, etc.). Because of this, it is difficult to present general program alternatives that include the variety of alternatives within each component. Therefore, this section presents each component independently -- complete with the range of alternatives available for the scope and components of a program. This information was then used by the Advisory Committee to make informed decisions regarding the program scope as well as its components. Before and after simulations are presented in Appendix H and provide visual examples of select components.

### Program Scope

- Alternative 1 Provide a quality-oriented program based solely on a strict review of qualifying applications. A program under this alternative would not involve the development of a statewide master list and inventory process. Rather, each route making a preliminary "short-list" of candidate routes would be inventoried for compliance with criteria guidelines.

Strict adherence to criteria guidelines would, by nature, limit the number of byways designated. This limitation would ensure the development of a smaller, quality-oriented program.

- Alternative 2 The Department of Transportation would develop an initial system of eligible routes based on absolute criteria relative to roadway characteristics and safety conditions. The Department would develop a mechanism for the public to suggest more routes.

This would allow the Department to ensure submission of appropriate route applications without having to commit resources to multitudes of pre-application information requests and follow-up time on inappropriate routes.

Review of the applications would still be based on the degree to which each application adhered to both the "absolute" and "non-absolute," or specific criteria, guidelines. This strict adherence would be necessary to ensure the quality-oriented nature of the Program.

- Alternative 3 Provide a quantity-oriented program with an internal goal of designating all routes listed on the statewide master list. Review of the applications would serve to formalize the process rather than exercise control on the number of routes eligible for consideration. Routes would still be required to meet the absolute criteria, but little emphasis would be placed on the "non-absolute" or "specific" criteria available for consideration.

### Review and Selection Process

- Alternative 1 Under this alternative, the review and selection of byways applications would be conducted in-house by department staff and or administrators. Typically, staff members would provide the initial review, and forward final recommendations to an administrative review team for concurrence and final selection.
- Alternative 2 The review process under alternative 2 would be similar to alternative 1. Staff members would provide an initial review and forward their recommendations for administrative approval. The administrative review team would prepare final recommendations and submit them to the Highway Commission for final review and selection.
- Alternative 3 This alternative would place review and recommendation duties on a review committee, similar in content to the Advisory Committee assembled for the initial investigation. It would be a constituent-oriented review committee which had been given a mandate to conduct the review and make recommendations based on the guidelines set forth in the Program. Procedurally, department staff would review applications for completeness before submitting them to the review committee which would in turn, make designation recommendations to the Highway Commission.
- Alternative 4 The review process under alternative 4 would be similar to alternative 3. The constituent-oriented review committee would provide an initial review and forward their recommendations to an administrative review team at the Department. The administrative review team would prepare final recommendations and submit them to the Highway Commission for review and final selection.

### Administration/Management

- Alternative 1 For the immediate, short-term future, the recommended scenic byways/backways program will be administered by integrating the planning, management, and budget requirements into existing Department of Transportation capabilities. Management requirements of the byways/backways program would be absorbed by existing staff. No immediate additional budget allocations should be requested.

- Alternative 2 Integrate program administration and associated budget requirements into existing departmental capabilities. Management requirements of the Byways Program would be the responsibility of one individual. Current positions and associated responsibilities within the existing planning staff would be restructured to free-up one FTE.
- Alternative 3 A new FTE would be hired to manage the Byways Program. This position would receive support from other planning staff, but would individually conduct the majority of the program management.

### Funding

It is assumed that all three alternatives would include active pursuit and coordination of outside funding opportunities -- proportional to the administrative alternatives identified above.

- Alternative 1 No additional funding. No additional budget allocations would be requested for management of the Program. Any allocated funding for program management would come from within the existing budget.
- Alternative 2 Reallocation of existing budget. No new budget allocations would be requested at the legislative level for management of the Program. However, reallocation of funds for program management could potentially come from within the existing budget. For example, SPR funds could be reallocated for planning and research associated with the Program.
- Alternative 3 Seek legislative appropriation. Additional funding would be necessary for the new FTE. In addition, because this position would be full time and dedicated to the Program, more funding would be likely to support additional management duties.

### Facilities

The following would be dependent on the availability of funding and the Department's ability to manage the respective tasks:

- Alternative 1 No facility improvements or development. Under this alternative, no new development or improvement of facilities would occur. It assumes that the Department would not have the ability to manage the development, improvement, or maintenance efforts -- even if outside sources provided funding.
- Alternative 2 Improve upon existing facilities. This alternative allows for existing facilities such as pull-outs, rest areas, passing lanes, bike paths, etc., to be improved and incorporated into the scenic byway. Both the department's time and resources would be conserved using this alternative. One drawback to this alternative would be that not all existing facilities are located in the area designated on the scenic byway. It does, however, provide a medium cost alternative to providing facilities that meet the goals of the designated route.
- Alternative 3 A somewhat more costly, but less resource intensive alternative would be to incorporate new facilities into the scenic byway only during scheduled construction or upgrade type activities on the highway. Assuming funding availability, planning facility development into scheduled activities would be easier to accomplish and

complete than proposing stand-alone development activities for incorporation into the Department's short and long-term plans. CTEP or MDT Enhancement funds could be used for scenic byway enhancements to the project.

- Alternative 4 The most costly and resource intensive alternative would be to develop byways facilities as new projects. This alternative would involve major planning, engineering, and fiscal coordination. In addition, lengthy periods of time could often be necessary to "fit" such a project into the Department's construction schedule -- even if outside funding is available and the Department is able to manage the effort.

### Signing (Route Markers)

The following would be dependent on the availability of funding and the Department's ability to manage the respective tasks. The chosen sign program would be coordinated with tourism-related signing programs of other agencies.

- Alternative 1 A basic signing program would be implemented under alternative 1. Signs would be of standard MDT specifications (similar to the existing Lewis and Clark Trail signs, etc.) and placed at the beginning and end points of the designated routes. Directional signs would also be located on adjoining routes.
- Alternative 2 The basic signing program identified under alternative 1 would also be implemented under this alternative. However, in addition to the placement of standard signs at the beginning and end points, "trailblazer" signs would be placed at key locations along the route -- informing the motorists they are still travelling a designated scenic byway. Directional signs would be located on adjoining route at the junction with the designated route.
- Alternative 3 This alternative represents a higher cost, but more aesthetically oriented signing program. It reflects the National Park and U.S. Forest Services' natural sign program where pedestal type signs (wood and stone character sign) are used to identify special opportunities (e.g., entering national forests, entering scenic parkways, etc.). These natural signs would mark the beginning and end points of the scenic byway -- with standard MDT byway "trailblazer" signs marking the remainder of the route. Directional signs would be established on adjoining route at the junction with the designated route.

### Promotion

The following would be dependent on the availability of alternative funding sources, and on the Department's ability to manage the respective tasks:

- Alternative 1 Promotion under this alternative would be totally dependent on local level initiatives or those of other regional or statewide interest group -- including other State agencies if appropriate. No promotional efforts would be undertaken by the Department other than the oversight of content and distribution.
- Alternative 2 Cooperative efforts between the Department and other agencies, corporations, or public interest groups define the second promotion alternative. Combined resources (For example: MDT, Travel MT, etc. and local and private ventures) aimed at aggressively promoting the Scenic Byways Program could be used to

effectively increase the awareness of Montana's scenic byways and backways through statewide information meetings (for potential applicants and interested parties), guides and reference materials, travel brochures, convention booths, and write-up on State maps, etc.

- Alternative 3 The third alternative is reserved for total Department control over all promotional efforts. It allows for no local, regional or statewide involvement by interested groups or agencies. This alternative allows for strict regulation of the promotional efforts going into the Byways Program and its individual routes.

### Oversight Alternatives

The following section briefly introduces the general alternatives available for administering the oversight of the individual scenic byways. Oversight is necessary to ensure that the route continues its eligibility as a designated scenic byway. Although overall program oversight will be administered through the Department, route specific oversight can occur at any of the levels identified below. The chosen oversight body would be responsible for preparing annual reports to the Department identifying areas of concern and recommendations for additional designation or de-designation.

- Alternative 1 This alternative would designate the Montana Department of Transportation, its district engineers, or planning staff as the entity responsible for overseeing designated routes. The Department would conduct yearly or bi yearly inspections to ensure the routes are still in compliance with the goals and objectives of the Scenic Byways Program, individual corridor management plans and the designation criteria.
- Alternative 2 The existing Scenic Byways Advisory Committee would provide the necessary oversight under alternative 2. Annual or bi annual inspections would be conducted by individual members of the Committee on routes within their area of the State. Alternatively, a subcommittee could be formed made up of Committee members whose purpose would be to inspect the designated routes as described above.
- Alternative 3 A new committee would be established under alternative 3 to provide oversight services on designated routes. Two options are available for consideration under this alternative. First, a statewide oversight committee could be formed, either on an assignment or volunteer basis. This statewide committee would be responsible for inspecting the designated routes on a yearly or bi yearly basis for compliance as described above.

Second, route specific oversight committees could be established on an assignment or volunteer basis. These committees would be multi-disciplinary by design -- comprised of individuals from both the private and public sectors. Each committee would be responsible for overseeing compliance activities on the specific route(s) within their area. This option is often most readily accepted as it allows the local presence to self-regulate the route's compliance rating. In many cases, the local oversight committee is the most effective since it is their own community that could be affected by de-designation procedures. In addition, it is often less costly in terms of administrative, personnel, and financial resources for the Department to support such local efforts.

Alternative 4 Finally, local (city and/or county) governments could provide the oversight responsibilities on byways located within their jurisdiction. The principles behind this option are similar to that of a route specific committee described above, but brings the duties back to the regulatory arena -- which, in some instances, could effect greater compliance with the Program, Corridor Management Plan, and designation criteria. Some local government entities could see the added responsibility too costly and time consuming for incorporation into their respective program -- thereby excluding this alternative from consideration.

## RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE

### Alternative for Short-range Plan

This alternative is based on the information gathered in previous chapters. It combines the findings from Chapter 3, which recommended the extent to which the Department can manage a scenic byways program, utilizing the range of alternatives listed above to formulate a program scenario best suited for short-range planning and budgeting. Future developments in the Scenic Byways Program could provide for changes in its organization and management. Such changes could, in return, translate into any of the previous alternatives being preferred over this recommended alternative.

The Montana Scenic Byways Program should be quality-oriented and based on the preliminary development of a preliminary statewide master list and inventory. Development of the statewide list would be a proactive effort by the Department to identify routes which best meet the absolute criteria established in Chapter 4. A statewide public involvement strategy would be implemented to identify additional routes that meet these criteria. The routes identified on the list would then be inventoried for compliance with the absolute criteria identified in Chapter 4. Those not meeting the guidelines would be withdrawn from eligibility, until they could meet the criteria.

The statewide list would be used as a means of simplifying the application review process because only routes listed in the statewide master list would be eligible for designation. Because the routes would already have been inventoried, there would be no need to go through the short listing process.

Review of the applications would be based on the degree to which each application adhered to both the "absolute" and "non-absolute," or specific, criteria guidelines. This strict adherence would be necessary to ensure the quality-oriented nature of the Program.

The review and recommendation of byways applications would be conducted by a constituent-oriented review committee. Department staff would review applications for completeness before submitting to the review committee which would in turn, make recommendations to the Highway Commission.

The Program would be administered by integrating planning, management, and budget requirements into existing departmental capabilities. Management requirements of the Byways Program would be absorbed by existing staff. Each of the existing staff members would allocate a portion of their time to certain aspects of the Program.

In an effort to keep the administration of the Program within the existing capabilities, thereby ensuring its safe inauguration, no additional budget allocations would be requested. Any allocated funding for program management would come from within the existing budget.

Designated routes would be eligible for complimentary facilities (bike paths, pull-outs, information kiosks, etc.). The recommended alternative allows for existing facilities such as pull-outs, rest areas, passing lanes, bike paths, etc., to be improved to meet the Scenic Byway objectives, rather than proposing new development. Both the Department's time and resources would be conserved using this alternative. Locational problems associated with existing facilities could be a short-term problem until approved and fully funded facilities could be incorporated into routes.

A basic signing program with placement of standard signs at the beginning and end points, "trailblazer" signs located at key points along the route, and directional signs located on adjoining route is recommended.

Program promotion would be a cooperative effort between the Department and other agencies, corporations, or public interest groups. Combined resources aimed at aggressively promoting the Scenic Byways Program could be used to effectively increase the awareness of Montana's scenic byways through statewide information meetings (for potential applicants and interested parties), guides and reference materials, travel brochures, and write-up on state maps, etc.

Finally, to ensure the preservation of byways character, route specific oversight committees should be established on an assignment or volunteer basis. These committees would be responsible for overseeing compliance activities on the specific route(s) within their area. This option allows the local presence to self regulate the route's compliance rating.

#### Variations on Individual Routes

Despite the general parameters established above, the level of funding along individual routes could result in some routes having more facilities, "monument" style entrance signs, and greater promotional efforts. In these cases, however, the proponents would be required to coordinate with the Department.

### **COST CATEGORY FOR RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE**

Projected costs associated with the recommended alternative are those expected to be incurred by the Department -- not costs for specific development or improvement projects that could receive funding from other sources. The recommended alternative presented above was selected to fit into the Department's existing budget. Although a minimum amount of funding would be required to satisfy the basic signing program and cooperative promotional effort, the Department would not have to seek legislative appropriation under this recommendation.

#### Sign Costs

Costs associated with signing under the recommended alternative would be limited to those necessary for sign materials, assembly, and installation. A total estimate for the recommended alternative is not possible because no routes or number of miles have been identified. However, a general estimate can be made on a per sign basis. According to a department estimate, a standard byways sign (2'x2' sheet aluminum with 4"x4" post) would run between \$122 and \$150. A general rule-of-thumb for byways sign placement is one sign every 10 miles. Assuming a cost of \$150 per sign, a fifty mile designated route would require five signs at an estimated total of \$750.

If funding is not available within the existing budget, any of the alternative funding sources discussed in chapter 4 could be pursued. Sign programs for individual routes would be eligible for

CTEP or MDT Enhancement funding, as well as cooperative funding efforts with local interest groups or government agencies.

### Promotional Costs

The Department could incur some costs associated with promotion of the Scenic Byways Program under the recommended alternative. These costs would be variable depending on the promotional materials and the amount of cooperative funding. In general, if cooperative funding was slight, the Department could keep costs to a minimum by initiating more basic promotional strategies. For example, byways and backways promotional or guide materials could be produced internally by the Department's printing office.

With the availability of cooperative funding, the Department could keep its costs low, while developing "eye-catching" promotional materials. These materials could include color brochures on the Program or individual routes, a byways and backways user guide, advertisements in magazines, or write-ups in Travel Montana (Department of Commerce) brochures.

## COORDINATION STRATEGIES WITH OTHER AGENCIES

This investigation has identified intrastate and interstate cooperation as a necessity for successful implementation of a scenic byways program. To date, all agencies contacted have acknowledged an interest in cooperating with the Department throughout the development of the program and the subsequent designation of individual routes.

In the program development phase of this project, federal, state, tribal, and local governments, neighboring states, and other entities with specific route interests (e.g. Trail of the Great Bear, Lewis and Clark Trail, etc.) will be encouraged to meet with the Department to establish specific cooperative strategies. Strategies for signing, management, funding, and future planning will be discussed, and results formally incorporated into the program. The following is a preliminary list of parties that should be coordinated with closely throughout program development:

- o U.S. Forest Service
- o Bureau of Land Management
- o Tribal governments
- o National Park Service
- o Federal Highway Administration
- o Montana Department of Commerce - Travel Montana
- o Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
- o Montana Department of State Lands
- o Cities and Counties (i.e. MACo and League of Cities and Towns)
- o Trail of the Great Bear
- o Idaho
- o Wyoming
- o North Dakota
- o South Dakota
- o Canadian provinces

## PRELIMINARY FORMAT FOR BYWAYS GUIDE

The Montana Scenic Byways Guide would be organized in a simple, color coded format for quick

reference. The guide would be organized by theme (i.e. historic, scenic, educational, recreational or natural) and would include the discussion of byways and backways within that theme. Narrative descriptions of each route would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

The following outline represents a conceptual approach to organizing the guide:

## 1.0 Introduction

The introduction would profile the Scenic Byways Program and describe how the guide can be used to facilitate a better understanding of the byways system. It would also include a description of the color coded interpretive tabs that allow for quick reference.

The introduction would present general precautions for consideration when travelling the scenic byways system. Because many byways and backways may be off the beaten path, advanced planning information, such as fuel and emergency supplies, would be presented.

Finally, the introduction will welcome all readers to the individual byways. It will serve to promote enthusiasm in travelling the routes, and offer a discussion on the benefits of using the byways system.

## 2.0 Historic routes -- Orange

Byways -- A narrative description of each historic byway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

Backways -- A narrative description of each historic backway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

## 3.0 Scenic routes -- Blue

Byways -- A narrative description of each scenic byway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

Backways -- A narrative description of each scenic backway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

## 4.0 Educational/scientific routes -- Green

Byways -- A narrative description of each educational byway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

Backways -- A narrative description of each educational backway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

## 5.0 Recreational routes -- Red

- Byways -- A narrative description of each recreational byway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.
- Backways -- A narrative description of each recreational backway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

## 6.0 Natural routes -- Brown

- Byways -- A narrative description of each natural byway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.
- Backways -- A narrative description of each natural backway would provide the reader with information on key points of interest, facilities and services, cautions, and restrictions.

## 7.0 Cross-reference (Index)

The cross-reference section, or index, would be organized in a way that allows for alternative retrieval of byway and backway information. For example, if a motorist knew the name of the route, but wasn't sure what thematic category it would fall under, he/she could look up the name in the index and find out what page in the guide the route could be found.

The layout and design of the guide would be variable depending on the level of funding available for its development. If sufficient funds were available, the guide could be printed in a full-color, glossy format with photos of each route and an "eye-catching" cover. If however, few funds were available, the guide could be printed on standard paper with no photos and a very basic cover.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOLLOW-UP

The following section incorporates specific findings from the Advisory Committee meeting that was held in Helena on May 26, 1994. Some of the findings and recommendations were follow-up from unfinished business at the previous meeting.

### Route Jurisdiction

Route jurisdiction legally designates the entity responsible for the operations, maintenance and jurisdiction of the roadway itself. Certain eligible routes may pass through lands owned by one stakeholder (e.g. reservation), but the maintenance, operation, and jurisdiction of that route may be the responsibility of a different entity (e.g. county). The Advisory Committee agreed that gaining preliminary approval of the jurisdictional entities must be the first step in the nomination process. The members felt the jurisdictional entities could give preliminary approval through a memorandum of understanding followed by formal approval once the corridor management plan is complete. It would be the responsibility of the nominating parties to keep these entities well informed throughout the application process and to involve them in the development of the corridor management plan.

*Recommendation:* The Advisory Committee agreed it should be an absolute requirement that: "Each agency, entity, or government with jurisdiction and responsibility for any roadway nominated for designation shall approve of any application submitted for a byway or backway designation."

### Adjacent Land Jurisdiction

Adjacent land ownership was discussed at the March 25, 1994 meeting. However, the issue was revisited because the concept of majority was questioned. For example, what if one landowner (e.g. Forest Service) owned the majority of land along a route and voted for a scenic byway or backway designation and two small property owners voted against the designation? Would the designation be denied even though the owner of the majority of the land had voted for it?

*Recommendation:* The Advisory Committee unanimously agreed to amend the March 25, 1994 recommendation to read: "Routes must have strong local support, continuing advocacy, and local commitment to a scenic byway or backway designation."

### De-designation

There needs to be a de-designation process built into the Scenic Byways/Backways Program. The Advisory Committee concluded that there would be two circumstances which determine when a route should be reviewed for de-designation: 1) When a community(ies) no longer wants its route designated (voluntary removal); and 2) when a segment(s) of a designated route has violated restrictions set out in the corridor management plan (non-conformance).

*Recommendation:* A removal process allowing a route to be voluntarily de-designated would have to include a public meeting of the stakeholders involved. Voluntary delisting would have to have careful and serious consideration before action would be implemented. During the nomination phases of the process, all stakeholders would clearly understand the pros and cons of designating routes in their area.

Non-conformance will be measured against the terms or restrictions set out in the corridor management plan. To provide fair assessment of non-compliance, independent route review teams, including public volunteers and Department of Transportation staff, should conduct annual audits to ensure conformance. (Local representatives from each of the areas with scenic byway/backway designations could be included as members of the review teams.) If a route is in non-conformance, action should be taken to help the community(ies) resolve the problems. If the problems cannot be resolved, recommendation would be made to the Highway Commission to de-designate that route.

### Application Narrative

The Application Narrative (included in Chapter 4) is a summary of the absolute requirements and criteria previously developed by the Advisory Committee. It will be incorporated into the program procedures manual and can be distributed as an introductory document for people interested in learning more about the Scenic Byways/Backways Program.

The roadway jurisdictional and land use recommendations arrived at under discussion items 4 & 5 will be incorporated into the Application Narrative. Advisory committee members were asked to review the document for recommended changes or additions.

Committee members questioned whether "identifiable shoulder" had been declared an absolute requirement for byways. To clarify, tapes of the March 25, 1994 meeting were reviewed.

At the March 25, 1994 meeting, the committee felt a byway should, as a safety precaution, have a shoulder usable by pedestrians or bicyclists. However, it was pointed out that many Montana highways do not have identifiable shoulders, including parts of Highway 2. When asked whether AASHTO standards address shoulder requirements, committee member Gilmore said the requirements set by AASHTO are based on the functions of the highway - general traffic volume and truck traffic. The final committee action was an absolute requirement that reads, "A byway route must be paved." The wording in the Application Narrative will be changed to read: "Only existing roads that can safely accommodate expected traffic volumes will be considered for either a scenic byway or backway. Byways must be paved."

With regard to corridor management plans, the Committee was told the application packet would include a how-to manual to help applicants develop an acceptable plan.

*Recommendation:* Number 4 under Absolute Requirements for State Scenic Byways Nomination should read: "A corridor management plan consistent with federal, state, tribal, local and other land use/management plans must accompany each nomination."

*Recommendation:* The application package should contain a very detailed section on corridor plan development, addressing goals and objectives, guidelines, and examples.

#### Program Name/Logo

In order to be more inclusive of what Montana's byways and backways routes represent, the Committee recommended the name *Big Sky Byways/Backways* to identify the program.

Potential program logos were reviewed by committee members. No final recommendations were made. If the project moves into a program development phase, byways and backways logos will be reviewed and selected in greater detail.

#### What's Next

This final report will be reviewed by Department of Transportation officials and presented to the Montana Highway Commission for action, probably in August of this year. Advisory Committee members will be kept advised of future action. Committee members may also be called upon to assist and provide input if program development continues.



**Chapter 6****ISSUES IDENTIFICATION AND PRESERVATION STRATEGIES****TASK DESCRIPTION**

The recommended scope identified in Chapter 5 provides a structural and organizational framework from which Montana's Scenic Byways Program would evolve if the Department is authorized to proceed with a program. Chapter 6 expands on that framework and provides strategies for addressing potential issues that could arise during the development of a program. It introduces preservation techniques and implementation strategies for incorporation into the individual scenic byways. Finally, MME maps a course for successful implementation of a scenic byways program in Montana -- including guidelines for development of enabling legislation as well as an introduction into program development.

**POTENTIAL SCENIC BYWAYS ISSUES**

This section identifies and addresses potential issues associated with development of a scenic byways program in Montana. Most issues have been addressed and successfully planned for through the development of criteria and designation procedures in Chapters 4 and 5. However, the following will emphasize again, the actions taken so far in this investigation to plan for any occurrence of these issues.

**1. Enabling Legislation**

If the Highway Commission decides to proceed with project development, enabling legislation will be proposed in the upcoming session of the Montana State Legislature. The first step is to contact the Governor's Budget Office and apprise them of scenic byways as a pending issue and provide a discussion of the potential for needed legislation.

The Department's legal counsel should draft initial language for proposed legislation and then consult with the Legislative Council prior to finalizing.

Upon approval by the Highway Commission, other affected state agencies should be contacted to determine the level of legislative coordination, if any, that would be needed among agencies to allow for development of all phases and aspects of the project. For example, the Department of Commerce, because of the effect of scenic byway/backways on tourism and the need for promotional coordination, will have a vested interest in the project. The Historical Society, also, has been involved in the study process since its inception and should not be omitted in the legislative phase.

A list of supporting federal agencies and organizations should be compiled to help with testimony. Legislative committee members should know about the level of cooperation that exists between the Department, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Indian Affairs, the National Park Service, and the Federal Highway Administration.

Supportive local government testimony from an organization like Montana Association of Counties may make a major difference in how legislators view the project. A list of constituent supporters willing to testify for the project could be very valuable throughout the legislative process. The Scenic Byway/Backways Feasibility Study Advisory Committee is a good foundation for developing that list. Supportive testimony from recreationists, agriculturalists, tribal

representatives, environmentalists, tourism, private industry such as AAA, Montana Motor Carriers, Western Environmental Trade Association, and outdoor advertising could be a deciding factor for many legislators.

A legislative information packet should be made available to key legislators. Providing a packet to all legislators could be costly and is probably unnecessary because much of the information would most likely go unread due to the volume of material with which legislators have to contend. Committee members, however, should have materials available to them for review. Potential committees that may need to deal with the issue, depending on what happens throughout the process, include: Highways and Transportation, State Administration, House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Claims.

The legislative information packet itself should contain:

- o The final report or executive summary of the Montana Scenic Byways Feasibility Study
- o The final report of the National Scenic Byways Advisory Committee Report
- o An explanation of the feasibility study process
- o A copy of the draft bill language
- o A cover letter from the Department Director that includes an explanation of packet materials and why enabling legislation is needed

## 2. Inter and Intrastate Coordination

For a scenic byways program to be successful it must include provisions for coordination with neighboring states, other state and federal agencies, as well as tribal and local governments. Significant controversy could arise if the Department were to proceed with program development and route designation without first coordinating with the necessary jurisdictional entities -- including neighboring states that could have an interest in connecting routes.

Specific issues such as 1) signing, 2) land use, 3) enforcement, 4) maintenance, and 5) de-designation must be considered by the Department prior to any route specific action.

*Signing* -- Designation of a route could result in sign "clutter" along the route. Special designation signs, directional signs, mile markers, hazard signs, and other highway signs already line many of Montana's highways. The addition of "trailblazer" byways signs would only add to the increasing number of signs placed along the route. Therefore, it is vitally important that during the development of a program, the Department's planners, sign and traffic engineers, as well as Forest Service, BLM, tribal and other entities with signs along the routes, meet to address the sign issue.

Possible resolution strategies include 1) consolidation, 2) inventory and planning process, 3) sign redesign, and 4) sign removal (other than directional, mileage, hazard, and byways signs) for the length of the byway.

*Land use* -- Without careful agency coordination, inconsistencies could occur between the route specific corridor management plan and the land management plans maintained by the respective agency that has jurisdiction on land through which the byway passes. The potential for this issue has been addressed in chapter 4 through the development of criteria that require the byway proponent to: 1) write the corridor management plan consistent with the existing land use management plan, and 2) work with the agency to develop a corridor land use plan if an existing one is not in existence.

*Oversight and de-designation* -- Some of the most controversial aspects of a scenic byways program are the procedures for overseeing the integrity of the byway and implementing de-designation procedures if necessary. It is often politically sensitive to attempt a de-designation of a scenic byway because of the ramifications on tourism, local economies, and Department responsibilities.

To avoid this possible conflict, the Advisory Committee recommended in Chapter 5 that any oversight would be handled through route specific oversight committees made up of individuals from both the private and public sectors. By making the locals responsible for overseeing the integrity of the route, it was felt that there would be a greater chance for self-regulation. It would also be encouraged for personnel from federal, state, and local governments to provide information to MDT regarding any potential areas of concern.

*Maintenance* -- Because many byways could pass through multiple jurisdictions, there is the possibility that issues could arise concerning maintenance responsibilities along the route. The potential byways program is designed around a low-maintenance scenario, whereby signs would be the only additional maintenance related item on the route beyond routine maintenance practices -- unless outside funding was raised by the proponent. If this were the case, the outside funding would also have to cover maintenance of the facilities. Trailblazer signs, as currently proposed, would be the maintenance responsibility of the Department and not the other jurisdictional entities. Any plowing, grading, repair, or mowing responsibilities on non-MDT maintained facilities would be coordinated between the Department and the jurisdictional entity, and spelled out in a detailed memorandum of understanding (MOU).

### 3. Intrinsic Values and Land Use

Intrinsic values are the basis for a route's designation as a scenic byway. Protection of these values is a vital concern in the Department's management of the Program. Land use along designated routes often support the intrinsic values which made the route eligible for consideration. Changes in an area's economic base and demographic structure often threatens how land along designated routes is developed and maintained.

The potential for this issue has been addressed in Chapter 4 through the development of criteria that require 1) strong local support, continuing advocacy, and local commitment to a scenic byway or backway designation, 2) development of a corridor management plan, and 3) the existence of existing county or comprehensive plans with land use preservation techniques available, and 4) assistance in the development of a corridor land use plan if one does not exist with the county or city. Specific land use preservation techniques are addressed later in this task report.

### 4. Designation and de-designation proceedings

Scenic byways are often welcomed with open arms once all concerns have been addressed and consensus achieved for successful implementation of the byway. However, de-designation proceedings as outlined in Chapter 5 could be very controversial for the Department. Typically, de-designation becomes a political issue because of the potential for reduced highway usage and the associated loss of economic benefits. This would make it very difficult for the Department to implement de-designation proceedings, even though the route no longer met the criteria necessary to remain a scenic byway.

The strategy being proposed to address this issue is proactive rather than reactive. The Department would rely on its policy of grassroots involvement -- from route nomination to oversight -- to ensure that no designated route would deteriorate to a condition warranting consideration for de-

designation. By building this local effort into the designation process for each route, the Department will have developed a self-regulating body which would translate into the necessary support, commitment, and advocacy that is presented in Chapter 5.

Because both private and public entities would be involved in the nomination, designation, and oversight process, there would be less pressure on the Department if and when de-designation proceedings were eminent. In addition, public hearings would be a vital part of the de-designation process. By having these meetings, the Department would provide the public an opportunity to salvage designation by implementing additional methods for preservation of the route's integrity. Public meetings would begin early in the de-designation process.

## 5. Environmental

The level of environmental concern associated with the designation of a route as a scenic byway would be proportional to the scope of the Program as discussed in Chapter 5. Under the recommended alternative, little to no environmental impacts would be expected because the alternative does not call for construction activities.

If a designated route under the recommended alternative were to receive funding for development projects, as discussed in Chapter 5, some environmental issues could be encountered. Potential areas of environmental concern would be limited to the impacts of construction and increased traffic on: 1) vegetation -- primarily plants listed as threatened, endangered, or sensitive species, 2) wildlife -- primarily animals listed as threatened or endangered, 3) water quality/aquatics -- primarily from sedimentation, highway runoff, and pollutants from the highway (e.g. spills, salts, petroleum byproducts, etc.), 4) air quality -- primarily from increased vehicle emissions and road dust, 5) noise -- resulting from increased traffic and facility usage, 6) recreational -- impacts to recreational opportunities and experiences on and adjacent to the route, 7) geology/hydrology -- primarily changes in geologic formations, stream channels as a result of construction, etc., 8) cultural -- impacts to cultural or historic sites resulting from construction and increased visitation, 9) topography -- changes in natural land forms from construction, and 10) socioeconomic -- primarily impacts to jobs and small business income along the route.

The Department's role in addressing these potential environmental concerns is easily defined through implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and in some cases the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). These two laws state that if any action by the respective agencies might "significantly affect the quality of the human environment," an environmental impact statement (EIS) must be prepared. To determine the significance of the action, an environmental assessment (EA) would typically be prepared. Since federal funding, a federal agency, and federal property would likely be involved in any development associated with the Byways Program, the Department could expect that an EA would be necessary to comply with NEPA and/or MEPA. This document would address the environmental impacts and any mitigation activities or alternatives necessary to offset them.

## PRESERVATION TECHNIQUES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Land use controls and other protective measures may be essential factors when considering the eligibility of a route for scenic byway status, or these controls may follow designation of a scenic byway in order to maintain and protect the critical resources. Only the states of California, Connecticut, and Oregon consider existing land use controls and other protective measures to be criteria for scenic byway designation. Other states either have, or are interested in developing, some form of protection for their scenic byways. In Scenic America's 1992 Questionnaire about

Scenic Byways (to which 34 states responded), 18 states requested assistance in developing corridor management plans or other techniques to protect scenic byways.

The type and level of controls appropriate for a particular scenic byway or scenic byway system should be selected based on the goals and objectives of the program as well as an understanding of who the route proponent is. This study recommended in Chapter 5 that the Department oversee the program and provide enabling legislation, but that local agencies and/or citizen groups be responsible for applying for byways/backways designation as well as meeting all the criteria presented in this study. In these circumstances it would be appropriate to integrate controls for scenic byways into the local agencies' regulations. The State may provide guidelines, information, and education.

As of 1992, the following state scenic byway programs had the listed implementation tools (Scenic America, 1992).

**Chart 1**  
**Implementation Tools by State**

<u>Tool</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>States</u>
Public hearings to review any alterations of byway	4	AR, RI, UT, WA
Environmental review of impacts to scenic byways required for proposed state and local projects	6	AZ, AR, CA, ID, OR, RI
Billboard ban on scenic byway	8	AR, CA, CT, GA, OR, SC, UT, WA
Local government management plans or other methods of protection	6	AZ, CA, NC, NY, OR, WA
Zoning overlay	3	AZ, CA, WA
Land use restriction	3	CA, GA, WA
Scenic easement	3	AZ, GA, WA
Development setbacks	3	CA, GA, WA
Restriction of adjacent zoning and development type	3	CA, GA, WA
Landscape protection	3	AZ, CA, GA
Other methods of scenic protection	11	ID, AR, CA, CT, GA, NY, OR, RI, SC, VT, WA

Note: Telephone conversations with the Washington Department of Transportation revealed that no existing land use controls exist. Also, in California land use controls were not very successful except around the national parks. They are currently reorganizing their program.

As the above results show, only a small proportion of states have land use controls on their scenic byways, although there is interest in developing better systems of protection for scenic byways. The first step is to develop a byway or corridor management plan which describes the resources along the byway and the goals for their protection. Following the development of this plan,

appropriate protection techniques may be selected and implemented. Currently, in Colorado and several other states, local scenic byway groups are being encouraged to develop corridor management plans.

### Existing Conditions in Montana

When considering the need and appropriateness of land use and other protection techniques, it is important to review conditions in the State of Montana. Generally, Montana is typical of western states where the historic philosophy has been one of rugged individualism. In this context, minimal land use controls have been implemented. However, recent changes including increased tourism and population, with associated land development pressures, have led some of these areas to adopt forms of land use control and protection measures. Presently in Montana, 36 out of 56 counties have completed comprehensive plans; All 128 municipalities and 56 counties have subdivision regulations; 21 municipalities have zoning, and; no counties have jurisdiction wide zoning -- although 6 counties have areas of citizen initiated zoning districts (Design Workshop, 1992). There is currently a major citizen based planning effort underway in Flathead County, where a performance based permit system is being recommended to control development. Consideration is also being given to developing a scenic overlay district to protect certain roads.

### Land and Resource Protection Techniques

A scenic corridor includes much more than just the roadway pavement, right-of-way area, and adjacent roadside. Included within its boundaries are elements that make up outstanding scenic vistas as well as the facilities for enjoying them. The features found within these areas may include lakes, streams, and wetlands; striking forest lands; beautiful desert or mountain views; pastoral views and vibrant urban scenes; and cultural and historic resources. In areas of flat terrain or on high ground, the corridor may extend for miles in horizon-horizon vistas. The width of scenic corridors may narrow in valleys or roadways lined with dense forests or other foliage.

The aesthetic quality of scenic corridors is easily compromised however. Strip commercial development, garish signs, billboards, poorly designed residential development, and incompatible uses such as unbuffered gravel pits, junkyards, mines, and industrial facilities can irreparably mar an otherwise attractive landscape. On the other hand, a program that encourages appropriate design for commercial development, appropriate signage, buffered industrial facilities, and creative residential siting can improve property values and increase tourism.

In an effort to protect the scenic, cultural, and historic resources found along designated scenic corridors, many communities have adopted a wide variety of scenic resource protection techniques. The following provides a summary of these techniques, adapted from "Scenic Resource Protection Techniques and Tools" (appendix J). These may be considered in future planning and protection.

### Land Acquisition Techniques

#### 1.1 Fee Simple Acquisition

In some cases, property deserving scenic protection may be acquired outright: Where communities need additional park land for public recreation, or where a property is of such outstanding scenic or historical importance that it can be adequately protected only through public ownership in "fee simple". Title of land in "fee simple" is an absolute holding of real property without any limitation to ownership.

Acquiring property, whether by purchase or through donation, is typically the most expensive way to protect it. Costs are not limited to acquisition, but also involve perpetual management and maintenance, unless the property is resold or leased to others who assume those responsibilities. In some states, nonprofit organizations must pay property taxes as well, or, if they do not, there may be local sentiment against removing a property from the tax rolls.

Fee simple acquisition is not the only way to acquire property. An organization may employ a number of creative techniques and economic incentives that may make acquisition more affordable for the buyer and more attractive to a property owner. Installment purchases, for example, can distribute an outlay of funds over time, and in some cases enable a seller to spread a capital gains tax liability over several years.

## 1.2 Lease-Purchase Agreements

Lease-purchase agreements are another approach to acquiring property outright. In this case, rent paid under the terms of a lease is applied toward an agreed upon purchase price. A lease-purchase agreement, like an option, is useful when it is necessary to act quickly when guaranteed financing is not available.

A lease-purchase agreement may be attractive to an owner who is anxious to sell and end responsibility for maintaining a property until the sale is consummated.

## 1.3 Bargain Sale

A bargain sale, sometimes called a "donative sale", allows for the acquisition of a property, partly as a purchase and partly as a gift, by obtaining property at less than its fair market value. The seller sets a price below the appraised value of the property and considers the difference to be a gift for which charitable income tax deduction may be claimed. The seller's compensation, therefore, is a combination of cash and a reduced tax burden. The Big Sur Land Trust in California used a bargain sale when a scenic 3,040 acre ranch came on the market. With a conservation-minded buyer providing the financing, the trust purchased the land at a bargain - giving the owner, a developer, a tax deduction - and immediately conveyed the property to the buyer. Before the transfer, the trust added stringent restrictions on development to the deed, plus a right of first refusal and a provision for access to the land by the University of California for educational and scientific purposes. The buyer was pleased to be able to protect an important site along a famous part of the California coast and to give the trust a boost in getting established.

## 1.4 Donation

Nonprofit organizations and local governments occasionally receive gifts of property through a donation or bequest. Organizations should encourage donors to inform them in advance of their plans for a bequest in order to assure that it is appropriate, and to discuss financial arrangements for the property's maintenance and operation. See Appendix J, "Criteria for Accepting Property Gifts", for a list of representative guidelines for receiving property as a gift.

## 1.5 Land Trusts

Land trusts are usually established to protect areas of significant natural diversity, unique scenic quality or important recreational opportunities. Some have engaged in historic

preservation or farmland protection as well. A land trust holds land and other property rights for the benefit of the public and often undertakes educational, recreational, and scientific activities.

As private organizations, land trusts have considerable flexibility in the way they can acquire property -- especially in their ability to take risks and to act quickly to buy land before it is sold for development. Many, such as the Jackson Hole Land Trust of Wyoming and the Big Sur Land Trust, take care to remain neutral on community issues - as compared to the traditional activism of some environmental organizations - to guard against alienating potential donors from a cross-section of the community.

Knowing just what should be protected is an important aspect of developing a property-protection program. An environmental inventory and scenic resources inventory should form the basis of the necessary decisions. Developing a set of general criteria in advance of such decision-making can aid the organization in accepting or declining a gift and in focusing its efforts on encouraging particular owners to donate, sell, or consider some other kind of protection.

### 1.6 Revolving Funds

A revolving fund uses the strategy of keeping funds ready to use in the event that a desirable property should suddenly become available. The reserve fund is repaid once the property is sold - that is, once it is "revolved". This approach contrasts with a land trust, which as a nonprofit subsidiary to a "parent" organization, is usually independent and may keep some of its property indefinitely.

Revolving funds are used to purchase threatened properties which are then sold to sympathetic buyers who agree to manage, develop, or restore the properties in accordance with deed restrictions. Resale of the properties, either "as is" or with improvements, replenishes the organization's funds and allows the money to be "revolved" to new projects. Tax-exempt status from the IRS enables an organization that is operating a revolving fund to sell conservation properties without being liable for capital gains taxation.

Related to the idea of a revolving fund is "pre-acquisition" or "passthrough", an approach involving a partnership between a nonprofit organization and a government agency that ultimately will acquire a property. The nonprofit organization buys it, if possible in a bargain sale, in advance of an agency's ability to come up with the funds. The more flexible nonprofit organization can move quickly when a property comes on the market, and then cover its cost when it sells the property to the agency, which permanently protects it. National groups such as the Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land have used this approach in working with park agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Forest Service.

### Land Transfer Controls

In response to concerns about rapid development, and reflecting a view about uncompensated restrictions on development such as exclusive agricultural zoning, many local governments have turned to the idea of acquiring less-than-fee interest in land in order to control its use.

The objectives of scenic farmland or environmental preservation may be served by removing the development rights from the bundle of rights which comprise full-fee ownership of farm property.

There are two basic approaches to acquiring development rights. The first is to acquire rights directly through purchase or donation. The second is to purchase the property in full fee, impose restrictions on development, and then sell or perhaps lease the land, subject to the restrictions. Although the second approach involves more familiar procedures than the first, it has not been commonly used in the U.S. Purchase of development rights (PDR) is the typical approach.

### **Purchase of Development Rights**

This approach can be described as purchase of the right to develop from owners of specific parcels, leaving the owner all other rights of ownership. The price of the rights is the reduction in the market value of the land as a result of the removal of the development rights. The remaining value of the land is the "farm or conservation or scenic use" value.

A voluntary program for the purchase of development rights will work only if landowners are willing to sell their development rights and if the public is willing to spend the money necessary to purchase them. Incentives for landowners and for the public are, therefore, integral to all PDR programs.

For instance, farmers who wish to stop farming their land and non-farmer-owners may be less interested in selling their development rights, and retaining residual ownership rights to their land. Sale of development rights may, however, prove beneficial to them also. Sale of his development rights might enable a retired farmer to continue to live in his farmhouse and be assured that his farmland will remain undeveloped. He could then rent his fields to another farmer, or sell them to a farmer who could afford a price reflecting the absence of the right to develop. The possibility of selling development rights may also be attractive to a non-farmer owner whose motive for ownership is the enjoyment of the country landscape. Such an owner, with no intention of developing his property, may be happy to exchange his development rights for cash.

Programs for purchasing development rights are not likely to be enacted and implemented unless there is strong support for the goal of preserving land which has scenic value, and the purchase of development rights is viewed as the only way to achieve this goal.

### **Land Banking**

Land banking consists of a public body purchasing extensive areas of land at rural use values, designating some of it, such as prime farmland, for permanent resource use, selling or leasing it with restrictions on use, and selling or leasing other areas for urban development.

A land banking program, however requires substantial funds and a long-term commitment. Land banking has been used extensively in Europe, especially in Sweden, Denmark, and France. It has not been widely used in the United States, however.

### **Transfer of Development Rights**

An innovative method of reducing the public costs of acquiring development rights is to shift the responsibility for purchasing rights from the government to private developers. Such a procedure is known as the transfer of development rights (TDR). Under TDR, development rights are purchased and used in another location, whereas in a purchase of development rights program, the development rights are purchased and retired.

In the classic TDR system, preservation districts and development districts are identified. Development rights are assigned to owners of land in the preservation districts in a systematic manner. However, owners of land in the preservation district are not allowed to develop, but instead may sell their development rights to owners of land in the development districts, who may use these newly acquired development rights to build at higher densities than normally allowed by the zoning. TDR systems are intended to maintain designated land in open uses and compensate the owners of the preserved land for the loss of their right to develop it.

TDR programs generally recognize that in order for a transaction to be completed, three conditions must be met: 1) The owner of land in the preservation area must have an incentive to sell his rights for transfer rather than to exercise them by developing his land; 2) The developer must have an incentive to acquire rights, rather than to build under the usual density restrictions of the existing zoning; and 3) Neighbors of the potential development must have some assurances that excessive densities will not result.

## **Deed Restrictions**

Covenants (also called deed restrictions) pertain to restrictions imposed on subsequent owners when a property is transferred, as opposed to easements, which can be created without transfer of the fee title. For organizations, covenants operate in the same fashion as easements and are commonly used with limited development and revolving funds. (An individual transferring a property to another owner can use a covenant instead of an easement to impose restriction on the use and development of a property, but the covenant is generally unenforceable once the transfer dies.)

## **Land Use Controls**

### **Conservation and Scenic Easements**

The interest held by a property owner is like a "bundle of rights", each associated with the property. Such rights include the right to farm, to extract minerals, to cut timber, and to do anything else with the property unless prohibited by law. These rights can be separated from the "dominant estate" and transferred to other parties as "less-than-fee interests". An easement is one such less-than-fee interest.

In granting an easement, an owner gives up some of the rights in a property, as specified in the deed of easement (the legally recorded document); that is, the owner agrees to certain restrictions in what could otherwise be done with the property. For example, an owner can sell to a mining company the right to extract ore or give a neighbor the right to cross a field; easements covering mineral rights and right-of-way have been in use for centuries. See Appendix K, for an example of scenic easement from Petoskey, Michigan.

### **Zoning Ordinances**

A zoning ordinance usually has two parts: an explanatory text and a map showing the boundaries of each zoning district. The text includes references to appropriate state enabling legislation, legal definitions, provisions for relief in certain cases, and procedures for appeal. It also includes a carefully written statement of purpose for each category of zoning, enumerating both permitted and prohibited uses. Boundaries between zones usually follow human-made borders, such as roads, or the edges of significant natural features (e.g. flood plains, steep slopes, or wetlands).

A basic zoning ordinance defines residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural uses and designates specific areas for each use. Uses in each zone can be exclusive or cumulative. Exclusive-use zones allow only those uses specified by the ordinance. Unrestricted zones allowing multiple uses are possible, but do not allow for more specific regulation of uses as is possible under exclusive use.

### **Overlay Zoning**

Many communities today prefer to use ordinances that offer more flexibility and more land protection than traditional zoning. Relatively new tools, such as performance zoning, are being used in some communities as alternatives to traditional zoning and subdivision regulations.

Local governments have used overlay zoning (sometimes called "critical area zoning") to protect certain resources found throughout the community, regardless of zoning, such as steep hillsides or a scenic river. Overlay zoning does not affect the density or use regulations present under existing zoning; rather, it is superimposed over a community's various zones, creating an additional set of requirements to be met when the special resources protected by the overlay would be affected by a proposed change. Designation and protection of historic districts and sites is a kind of overlay zoning. The designation and protection of shorelands is another example.

### **Scenic Highway Districts**

The basic purpose of the Scenic Highway District is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty adjacent to and along our scenic corridors in conjunction with the existing zoning classifications. Scenic districts seek to prevent unsightly developments which mar or detract from the natural beauty by exercising reasonable control over the land within the restricted areas.

A scenic highway zoning district can be superimposed over the existing zoning district classifications assigned to the area. All uses normally permitted for the existing zoning category as prescribed by the ordinance continue to be permitted, with the exception of prescribed limitations. See Appendix L for two examples of scenic roads and highway districts ordinances.

### **Agricultural Districts**

Agricultural districts are legally recognized geographic areas whose formations are initiated by one or more farmers and approved by one or more government agencies. The districts, with their benefits and obligations, are created for fixed, but renewable periods of time, ranging from four to ten years. In all programs except New York's, land cannot be included in an agricultural district without the owner's written permission.

### **Land Development Costs**

### **Subdivision Regulations**

While zoning governs the use of land in the community, including the intensity of use, subdivision regulations control the design of new development that is permitted, including functions such as traffic circulation or drainage. Specifically, a subdivision regulation sets

standards for the division of larger parcels of land into smaller ones, including specifying the location of streets, open space, utilities, and other improvements.

Subdivision and subsequent development affect a community's character, its natural resources, and its public services. Good design and engineering standards mandated by subdivision regulations can go a long way to lessen the negative impacts of development, especially its visual effects, even where zoning permits intensive development. For example, regulations can mandate that strips of natural vegetation be retained or added to create open space buffers between residential areas and agricultural land, or can encourage the planting of street trees or other vegetation that will eventually help a new development visually blend into the rural landscape.

## Cluster Development

Cluster development is the grouping of buildings and lots on a small portion of a land tract, and can be an effective way to allow limited development in rural and scenic areas. One of the major impacts of standard zoning and subdivision ordinances has been the creation of sprawling developments laid out with little regard for natural, agricultural, scenic, and historic resources, with little variety in design and density, and with little open space accessible to nearby property owners or the public. Cluster development allows for more flexibility in planning and building placement.

For example, a 100 acre tract under existing land use regulations could be divided into fifty residential lots. With a cluster development provision in the zoning ordinance, however, the developer would be able to maintain the same density of fifty units on 100 acres, but offer smaller lots. The remaining land can be dedicated for agriculture through a lease with a nearby farmer, as a park under local government jurisdiction, or as a scenic or recreational open space maintained by a homeowners' association. Such development may protect more of the original character of the environment and provide a more attractive setting than would a standard subdivision.

## Tax Incentives

In addition to the more permanent ways a community can protect unique properties, it is useful to examine tax incentives that, along with altruism, may encourage property owners to donate all or part of their property. Present federal tax law allows both individuals and corporations to take deductions from their taxable income for gifts of property, including easements, to a nonprofit organization designated as tax-exempt by the Internal Revenue Service or to a government agency. Individuals may deduct the value of the gift up to a certain percentage of their income and spread a sizable deduction over several years. If the gift can be divided into stages, it may be possible to spread deductions over many years. Donating a property can also reduce the value of the donor's estate at the time estate taxes must be paid. Similar savings may be available in state taxes.

For easements, a general kind of quality control is set forth in federal tax law (section 170(h) of the Internal Revenue Code). That section refers to a "qualified conservation purpose". Under this law, conservation purposes include the preservation of land for outdoor recreation or education, protection of "relatively natural habitat," and preservation of historically significant properties. Also a conservation purpose is served if the preservation of open space, included in farmland and forest land, creates a "significant public benefit," either for the "scenic enjoyment of the general public" or "pursuant to a clearly delineated Federal, State, or local governmental conservation policy".

## Planning

Planning is an essential framework for local government actions to protect scenic resources. Good planning encourages local government to consider future goals and translate them into priorities for public expenditures and the infrastructure that will support new and renewed development in the community. The task of planning is to provide foresight and overall coordination to a community's development pattern.

### **Comprehensive Plans**

A comprehensive plan is a community's blueprint for the future, specifying what actions should make the community a good place in which to live, work, and visit. In other words, the plan outlines what needs to be done, and how and when to do it in an organized fashion. Sometimes called a master plan, general plan, or comprehensive development plan, it is comparable to a company's management plan with goals and objectives. The written plan is one result of a continuing planning process. It is a guide to public and private decision-making in order to help a community avoid costly mistakes that might occur if no plan exists. See Appendix M for an outline of a typical local government comprehensive plan.

### **Environmental Review**

Local government environmental reviews can be an important tool in protecting natural resources and farmland. A community whose development approval process includes an environmental review can require the developers to do an environmental site assessment.

### **Site Plan Review**

Most towns eventually realize, that by itself, zoning is unable to ensure that new development is integrated sensitively into their community. Zoning, which regulates land use location and density, does not address the visually important design issues which have such a significant impact upon landscapes and townscapes. Exerting a positive influence over the design and scenic impact of new developments is often essential if a town's traditional image is to be protected and reinforced.

A middle-ground approach exists -- one that offers towns more comprehensive control over new developments, while reducing the danger of "unbridled discretion" exercised by boards which work from inadequate by-laws lacking in necessary detail.

The Site Plan Review is most often conducted as a modified special permit process. To minimize "loop-hole" opportunities, local governments require this type of review for most types of non-residential uses. In order to provide facts which are sufficient to enable the reviewing board (and other interested parties) to fully understand the implications of the proposed development, a list of site planning characteristics is required for submission by the applicant. Consistency in site plan submissions can ensure all relevant information is available to the reviewing boards, so that a well-informed decision may be rendered.

## Sign Control

The ideal system of sign regulation provides needed information without creating clutter, blocking scenic views, or clashing with the natural or historic character of an area. Local communities have broad legal authority to regulate signs based on safety, economic, and aesthetic considerations.

For regulatory purposes, signs are generally divided into two categories: on-premise signs and off-premise signs. The terms "off-premise" signs and "billboard" are frequently used interchangeably. The material that follows is based on "Creating Successful Communities, A Guidebook to Growth Management Strategies" (The Conservation Foundation, 1990).

## **Billboards**

### **1. Bans on New Billboards**

Billboards, or off-premise signs may be controlled simply by banning new signs in conjunction with amortization of existing non-conforming signs. Alternatively, if these measures are considered to be too severe, a variety of other control tool options exist including 1) a billboard cap, 2) special permit criteria, 3) billboard-free districts, 4) size, height and spacing limits, 5) annual permit fees, and 6) taxation. The following sections describe the options in more detail.

### **2. Amortization of Nonconforming Signs**

Many communities require removal of nonconforming billboards and signs through a process known as amortization. Rather than paying a landowner cash for removing billboards, or allowing them to continue indefinitely, many communities allow these uses to remain in existence for a number of years after enactment of a new regulation. During this period, the owner may both depreciate a sign and earn a reasonable return on the investment. At the end of the amortization period, the sign must be removed or brought into conformity.

### **3. Controlling Signs Along Federal Highways (Federal Highway Beautification Act)**

The Federal Highway Beautification Act preempts local control of billboards located within 660 feet of interstate highways or federal primary highways, and visible from the highway. Most important, this law effectively prohibits amortization of billboards within federal highway corridors by requiring that owners of nonconforming billboards receive cash payments for removal, even if amortization of nonconforming billboards is permitted by state law. In a series of memoranda from the U.S. Department of Transportation, the department has interpreted the HBA as follows:

- o Communities may ban the erection of new billboards along federal highways.
- o Communities may limit the size, height, placement, and spacing between new billboards along federal highways.
- o Communities may impose reasonable regulations reducing the size and height of existing billboards without triggering the cash compensation requirement, if the size and height can be reduced without forcing removal of the billboard.
- o Communities may remove billboards without paying cash compensation if the billboard company refuses after a reasonable time to comply with regulations reducing the size and height of billboards.
- o Communities may charge permit fees, and remove billboards without cash payment for failure to obtain a permit.

### **4. Local Billboard Control Tools**

The following are options for billboard control:

- o Billboard cap. Many communities have implemented a cap on the current number of billboards, with new construction allowed only when one or more existing billboards are removed, and as long as the new billboard is no larger than the one removed. For example, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Mobile, Alabama, require removal of an existing billboard for every new billboard erected. San Antonio, Texas requires removal of two existing billboards for every new billboard erected.
- o Special permit criteria. Many communities permit new billboards only by conditional or special use permit, and only in industrial districts. This allows a public hearing for each billboard application to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses.
- o Billboard free districts. Communities prohibit billboard in or near (e.g., within 1,500 feet of) any historic district, residential area, downtown commercial district, neighborhood commercial district, park, scenic vista, community gateway, or similar community resource, and along scenic corridors and highways. For example, Tucson, Arizona, limits billboards to 72 square feet and prohibits them completely in historic districts, along scenic streets, gateways, roads, airport approaches, and certain business districts.
- o Site-specific height limits. Communities prohibit billboards that rise above the treeline or which are on or over the roofs of buildings.
- o Annual permit fees. Communities charge fees to cover the expenses (including staff and office space costs) of processing permit applications, ensuring compliance, and maintaining a sign inventory. The Coalition for Scenic Beauty recommends a fee of at least \$200 per sign structure.
- o Size, height, and spacing requirements. Communities implement size, height, and spacing limits, such as limiting billboards to 25 to 35 feet in height, and 300 to 350 square feet in size, and with spacing requirements of 1,500 to 2,000 feet between billboards on primary roads, and 1,000 to 1,500 feet between billboards on secondary roads.
- o Taxation. Communities impose special road-view taxes on billboards. The revenues from the tax may be used to finance the acquisition and removal of non-conforming billboards, to acquire scenic easements, or for other public purposes. For example, Baldwin County, Alabama, has enacted a 10 percent gross receipts tax on billboards.

### **On-Premise Sign Control**

Many communities have determined that, without appropriate regulation, on-premise advertising becomes a competition to attract attention in which the largest and most garish sign wins. The following are options for on-premise sign control:

- o Limit free-standing signs to one per business with a maximum height of no more than 20 feet.
- o Prohibit or strictly regulate "problem" signs such as portable signs, pennants, banners, streamers, and flashing or intermittent lights.

- o Limit shopping centers, malls, office parks, and similar large developments to one group identity sign with no free-standing separate sign for individual businesses.
- o Impose special controls in historic districts, downtown commercial districts, and pedestrian oriented districts.
- o Regulate the color, lettering, style, proportion, illumination, and design to ensure compatibility with local character.

### View Protection

#### **View Protection Ordinances**

Despite the growing use of historic preservation ordinances and building design review regulations, many communities are recognizing the need to go beyond these narrowly focused efforts and take a comprehensive approach to protecting special vistas, scenic roads, and entryways - those visual characteristics that give an area a special sense of place. In some cities, this concern has been manifested in efforts to protect views of important public buildings like state capitols - Austin, Texas and Denver, Colorado, are two examples. In others, mountain views have spurred special regulations to limit building heights.

#### **Tree Protection Ordinances**

Across the United States there is a growing interest in protecting existing trees, particularly in urban areas, for both environmental and scenic purposes. A number of local governments have adopted a specific species of street tree as a community hallmark. Tallahassee, Florida, for example, is becoming known as the Dogwood Capital of the South for its aggressive program of planting dogwoods along streets throughout the city. Other communities have gone farther, adopting tree preservation ordinances and detailed landscaping requirements.

### Voluntary Approaches

In this section, several voluntary, private sector approaches for scenic resource protection are examined. By combining some of these approaches with others mentioned previously, a more flexible and feasible program can be created.

#### **Notification Programs**

A basic approach to prevent harm to important resources is a notification program. Owners who are made aware of important scenic resources on their properties are often willing to protect them once they learn of their existence. A notification program might logically follow a comprehensive scenic inventory. The community scenic protection organization simply lets the owner of a historic house, natural area, or other scenic property know of its significance, and suggests that it deserves protection. Notification generally consists of a brief letter describing why the property is significant and a follow-up visit to answer questions. Publicity is not necessary, and indeed it may be undesirable. Although entailing no actual agreement, notification can be an important first step in establishing a good relationship with a property owner; this relationship may eventually result in a permanent commitment to protecting a significant resource.

## Recognition Programs

A recognition program takes notification one step further by announcing publicly that a property is significant. Recognition programs have been used by federal, state, and local governments as well as nonprofit organizations. For example, "century farms" programs established in many states honor families who have owned and farmed the same property for one hundred years or more.

Recognition programs work because they play on the pride of the owner, who would not want to lose face in the community by destroying a resource after having been praised for protecting it. Some organizations present plaques or certificates to owners of recognized properties.

Although it may not be legally necessary to have an owner agree to list a property on a roster of significant properties, it is wise to do so. Some owners might resent the fact that an organization has compiled detailed information about their properties without sharing it with them, others may not want their holdings made public. To prevent hard feelings and, more importantly, to increase the owner's awareness of the significance of the property, the organization should secure the owner's permission to list the property.

## Nonbinding Agreement Programs

A number of state governments and nonprofit organizations operate nonbinding agreement programs for natural resources, many in association with recognition programs. Property owners agree in writing to protect specified significant features of their properties and usually receive in return a plaque or certificate that acknowledges the special nature of the property and the owner's contribution to its protection. The owner's obligation to comply is strictly voluntary. The agreements are based on mutual trust, pride of ownership, recognition and appreciation of the resource, commitment to conservation, and feelings of satisfaction that participation brings. The owner can withdraw from the program at any time with advance notice, typically thirty days, and receives no financial compensation and no tax benefits.

## Corridor Management Plans

Corridor management plans are included in the recommended criteria for byway selection by the Advisory Committee. Scenic America describes the need for and components of corridor management plans in Appendix I.

## General Recommendations

Scenic America (1990) recommends the following methods to protect scenic byways:

Based upon communications with successful scenic highway program administrators and polled members of the conservation community, in order to protect the scenic, historic, and cultural characteristics of designated scenic highways, the following steps are recommended when developing a scenic highway program or designating new scenic highway corridors:

1. Develop a corridor management plan - Communities located along designated scenic highways and roadways should develop management plans which outline ways in which the scenic, historic, and cultural characteristics of the road corridor will be maintained

while accommodating new development and increased tourism. Corridor management plans should include:

- o Visual inventory and viewshed mapping to identify important scenic, historic, and cultural resources to be protected
  - o Identification of natural resources to be protected
  - o Comprehensive plans that identify future development zones
  - o Commercial and residential site development requirements and design guidelines
  - o Roadway reconstruction guidelines
  - o Roadway safety improvement guidelines
2. Establish a tree protection policy - The clear cutting of trees immediately adjacent to the roadside should be prohibited along designated scenic highways. However, the clearing of vegetation to create or restore obscured scenic views should be allowed if such clearing is consistent with the objectives outlined in visual inventory identified in the Corridor Management Plan.
  3. Establish visual pollution controls - New off-premise outdoor advertising structures (other than approved uniform motorist information signs) should be prohibited on designated scenic highways. Limitations on size, height, and number of new on-premise signs should also be developed. Likewise, junkyards, gravel pits, mines, etc., within the scenic corridor viewshed should also be prohibited or buffered.
  4. Establish a system of uniform motorist information and directional signage - A uniform motorist information system should be developed to provide tourists with needed information about services and attractions. Highly successful motorist information signage programs now exist in Maine and Vermont.

Other methods of protection that may be suitable as the program develops include:

1. The development of scenic byway standards, particularly for signage and road edge treatment or landscaping. The former may include informational signs or alternatives to billboards. The latter may include building setbacks, tree preservation, revegetation techniques, pullouts, and view enhancement. They should be developed for the State and adopted by local agencies.
2. The development of a land trust for acquisition of key parcels of land. This may include creating a new group or coordinating with existing open space or farmland groups.
3. Counties and cities have a variety of land protection techniques available. It is important that there is coordination between the scenic byway proponents and the local agencies to implement appropriate protection techniques. For example, the city or county's master plan and zoning should recognize the scenic byway. They may designate open space adjacent to the highway, develop a scenic overlay zone, or regulate increased building setbacks. Protection of agricultural land by encouraging cluster development is another option. Presently Flathead County is in the process of adopting a master plan and a review system based on resource protection. They are considering a real estate transfer tax, cluster development, old growth forest programs and lake edge protection programs, among other techniques.

In Montana, where there is a wide range of opinions regarding individual rights and the need for resource protection, efforts toward protection will meet with opposition from rugged individualists

and support from conservationists. It will be critical to involve the public from the initial stages of program development to gain support and incorporate ideas. While MDT may develop and administer the program, implementation of protection techniques will have to occur at the local level.

### Montana's Byways Preservation Plan

In summary, given the public attitude to individual land owner rights, the minimal existing land use controls in the State of Montana, and the undeveloped system of protection devices in other scenic byway systems, it seems appropriate to minimize land use controls on Montana's proposed byway systems in the initial or "planning" phase. Three protection systems that should be considered initially are 1) signage. Billboard control is legislated under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 which states that once an Interstate or Primary route is designated as a scenic byway, no new billboards are permitted, other than those in conformance with specific guidelines in the act. 2) de-designation -- the opportunity to "de-designate" a highway if its scenic quality is degraded. Many states have de-designation control including Arizona, New York, and Wisconsin. 3) required corridor management plans. Corridor management plans have been recommended as prerequisites for a route to qualify as a scenic byway. These will include identification of resources, local protection techniques, and methods of implementation.

### GENERAL OUTLINE FOR CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

The principle baseline and enforcement tool in a scenic byways program is the corridor management plan. A corridor management plan would provide the Department and the proponent with a "plan of operations" for the proposed route. The plan serves as the primary guide that the Department and the route's oversight committee can use to track the routes successes and areas needing improvement. The following outline offers a very conceptual approach to the development of individual corridor management plans. At first glance, it may seem an extensive process -- especially for the grass-roots level participants. However, it serves as yet another assurance that only the serious proponents pursue designation of routes. This would ensure that only the highest quality byway and backway proposals be forwarded for review and subsequent designation.

#### I. Purpose

- A. Prioritized byway/backway theme (scenic, recreational, historic/cultural, natural, scientific/educational, etc.)
- B. Mission statement
- C. Goals and objectives

#### II. Description of Byways/Backway Resources by Theme (beginning with primary theme)

- A. Scenic
  - 1. General description of the scenic nature of proposed byway/backway (i.e. mountain/valley, badlands, wheat/rolling hills, combination, etc.)
  - 2. Comprehensive listing of key visual resources along the route (bi-directional)
- B. Recreation
  - 1. General description of the recreational nature of proposed byway/backway (i.e. motorized -- non-motorized or a combination)

2. Comprehensive listing of key recreational resources along the proposed route
  - C. Historic/cultural
    1. General description of the historic/cultural setting of proposed byway/backway (i.e. prehistoric, historic, Native American, traditional land uses, traditional lifestyles, combination, etc.)
    2. Comprehensive listing of key historic/cultural resources along the proposed route (non-confidential)
  - D. Natural
    1. General description of the natural setting of proposed byway/backway (i.e. geologic, rivers, lakes, wetlands, wildlife, vegetation, combination, etc.)
    2. Comprehensive listing of key natural resources along the proposed route
  - E. Scientific/educational
    1. General description of the scientific/educational nature of proposed byway/backway (i.e. existing interpretive facilities, museums, special events, paleontological excavations, forest management practices, working farms, etc. )
    2. Comprehensive listing of key scientific/educational opportunities along the proposed route (non-confidential)
- III. Description of Route Characteristics (non-thematic)
- A. Land use
  - B. Access
  - C. Roadway characteristics (paved, shoulders, condition, etc.)
  - D. Environmental hazard
  - E. Communities (how many, how large, etc.)
- IV. Development and Protection of Resources and Infrastructure
- A. Detailed description of proposed byway/backway length and origination/termination points (by mile markers)
  - B. Detailed description of proposed byway/backway attributes (signs, interpretative kiosks, facility improvements, developments, etc.)
  - C. Description of existing land use/management plans along the proposed byway/backway.
  - D. Detailed description of protection and oversight techniques (as described in this report)
- V. Public Involvement Plan
- A. Preliminary planning meeting

- B. Corridor information meeting (consensus building process)
- C. Local commitments
- D. Oversight meetings

## VI. Marketing and Promotion

- A. Identify potential markets
  - 1. Visitor profiles
  - 2. Identify existing markets
  - 3. Identify new target markets
  - 4. Visitor projections
- B. General marketing strategy
  - 1. Goals and objectives
  - 2. Propose methods for reaching target markets (existing and new)
    - a. Brochures/pamphlet distribution
    - b. Mass media
    - c. Audio tapes
    - d. Special events
    - e. Organization newsletters
    - f. Video production
    - g. Other
  - 3. Plan for gauging success of promotion
  - 4. Proposed funding for strategy

## VII. Organization and Management

- A. MDT coordination (liaison, schedules, reports, etc.)
- B. MOU's and other agreements
- C. Documentation of necessary support and local commitment.
- D. Oversight committee recruitment and procedures

## VIII. Funding and Financing

- A. Types, sources, and allocation schedules of committed funding
  - 1. NSBP funding sources
  - 2. Local funding sources
- B. Identification of potential funding sources
- C. Strategies for seeking potential funding
  - 1. Projected schedules
  - 2. Future projects planned upon receipt of available funding
  - 3. Potential funding sources and methods for acquisition

## IX. Implementation

- A. Schedule of activities (upon approval and funding)

- B. Coordination with MDT (physical efforts)
  - C. Reporting procedures (to MDT)
  - D. Initiation of evaluation and monitoring program
    - 1. Oversight committee assembly
    - 2. Oversight schedule and protocol
    - 3. Reporting procedures
- X. Evaluation, Monitoring and Reporting
- A. Review progress of individual strategies (funding, implementation, oversight, etc.)
  - B. Oversight
    - 1. Economic/demographic/highway
      - a. Economic
      - b. Highway usage
      - c. Accident rates
      - d. Tourist characteristics
      - e. Market origination
    - 2. Program compliance oversight
      - a. Compliance with protocols
      - b. Compliance with program criteria, missions, goals and objectives
      - c. Compliance with route mission, goals and objectives
  - C. Reporting procedures
    - 1. On above findings

## PRELIMINARY OUTLINE FOR MASTER PLAN

The following outline provides a very preliminary introduction to the components of the Scenic Byways Program Master Plan. The Advisory Committee agreed at their third meeting that a Master Plan of some sort would be a necessary aspect for the successful implementation of a byways program. A more detailed master plan strategy would occur in conjunction with the development of a scenic byways program in Montana.

- I Introduction
- II Purpose
- III Distribution and Management Principles (criteria and the Multidisciplinary Review Committee dictate equitable distribution and how to manage the system).
- IV Criteria
  - A. Byway
  - B. Backways
- V Master List
  - A. State initial cut
  - B. Public response
- VI Inventory Process
- VII Application Process (procedural manual outline as part of this section)
- VIII Review and Selection Procedures
- IX System Management
- X Oversight Process
- XI De-designation Process
- XII Appendix
  - A. Corridor management plan outline

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Upon approval to proceed by the Highway Commission and subsequent passage of a byways bill by the Montana Legislature, the Department would be able to proceed with the development of a scenic byways program. Findings from the Scenic Byways Feasibility Study would be the basis for the development of Program components. Changes in the program directive and the possible addition of stipulations by either the Commission or Legislature could alter the general recommendations and format presented herein. The following general approach outlines the development of the program and is presented on the assumption that the recommendations made in this investigation would be maintained. It was aligned with programmatic formats of neighboring states in an added effort to emphasize the coordination needs with these states.

### I. Introduction

The introduction to the Program would include: 1) a discussion of it's history, 2) Federal legislation and the National Scenic Byways Committee, 3) State legislation and the feasibility study effort, 4) purpose of the Program, 5) timeframes, and 6) Program components.

### II. Mission, Goals, and Objectives

Section II of the Program would reiterate the Department's mission, goals and objectives as set forth in the Scenic Byways Feasibility Study. It would discuss their importance in program development and would serve as a reminder of the Program's prime directive.

### III. Master Planning Process

This section would discuss a process for developing a master list of eligible routes across the State and a master plan outlining distribution and management principles. The Master Plan would be a subcomponent of the Scenic Byways Program and would serve as an internal guide for program management. It would be route/system specific, whereas the Program would be programmatic in nature -- not addressing specific routes.

### IV. Byways/Backways Nomination Criteria

This section would discuss the nomination criteria as resolved in the Scenic Byways Feasibility Study. It would provide a general discussion on how the criteria would be used and the relative importance (internal weighting) given to each.

### V. Nomination (Application), Review and Selection Process

Section V would establish the parameters for nominating, reviewing and selecting scenic byways and backways. For nominations, it would describe in detail application materials, eligible applicants, application procedures, submittal, and public involvement requirements.

### VI. Intra and Interstate Coordination

Coordination efforts would be detailed in three components: 1) Interdepartmental coordination would be discussed in an effort to ensure accurate exchange of information between planning, engineering, maintenance, and budget sections. Additionally, it would provide for open communications between the Department headquarters in Helena and the

district engineer offices statewide.

2) A framework for interagency coordination would be developed to ensure open channels of communication between the Department and other State, Federal, Tribal, and local governments. Coordination would be required with these agencies in the areas of designation, signing, maintenance, improvements, funding, de-designation, etc.

3) The Program must address multi-state coordination in an effort to foster a cooperative approach towards a multi-state network of scenic byways. Coordination efforts should focus on designation strategies, corridor management planning, funding, and preservation techniques.

## VII. Corridor Management Plan Guidelines

As discussed throughout this study, it is essential that the route proponent develop a corridor management plan as part of the application process. This portion of the Program narrative would provide detailed guidance for developing a corridor management plan. It would be an expansion of the outline presented in Chapter 6.

## VIII. Program Responsibilities

This section would detail the responsibilities associated with management of the Scenic Byways Program. It would identify department and personnel responsibilities for each of the following: 1) program management, 2) signing, 3) maintenance, and 4) construction and improvements

## X. Marketing Strategies

Section X would provide general guidelines and options for marketing of individual byways/backways or the entire network. It would offer options for internal as well as cooperative efforts with public and private entities. Goals and objectives would be highlighted with specific action items discussed in detail.

## XI. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Department's policy for oversight of the Program would be presented in this section. It would identify the procedures and criteria for selecting the route-specific oversight committees. In addition, it will establish a protocol and guidelines for the committees' review of routes, and proceedings for reporting findings to the Department.

## XII. De-Designation

Finally, the Program will detail the necessary steps to be taken if a route were to no longer meet the final designation criteria included in the Program. It would identify reporting procedures, public involvement requirements, administrative responsibilities, and decommissioning of the route as a scenic byway/backway.

## XIII. Appendices

The appendices will provide examples, supplemental support documents and the background data necessary for program implementation.



**APPENDIX A**  
**STATE SUMMARIES**



**APPENDIX A**  
**SCENIC BYWAYS INTERVIEW SUMMARY**

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**CALIFORNIA**

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- 2) California's Scenic Byways program was initiated in 1959. No other states had byways programs, so no real coordination effort exists -- even today. The only effort taking place is called the Tri-State Scenic Corridor. It includes a mutual highway designation along the coast from California to Washington. That corridor will have similar signing and maintenance efforts.

California is currently conducting a study of their program -- they feel that the current program isn't working because of one major problem:

Difficult to define what scenic really is -- beauty is in the eye of the beholder. The existing program doesn't define scenic.

California is leaning towards a concept of scenic that is based on how pristine an area is (i.e. the more pristine, the more scenic). To explain -- some may think that the redwood tree is scenic while yet another considers the creosote bush to be scenic. The way they are addressing this is by looking at how much vegetation you can see for that type.

The other concept is to define "striking scenic beauty". If something is unique to an area, such as Death Valley -- even though to some it is boring and drab, it is considered striking scenic beauty because of its originality.

- 3) All roads are eligible -- county -- freeway. California has two types of designation.

Eligible for designation. This was kind of a master plan idea from the 1950's whereby the State would identify all routes that were eligible for designation -- with designation occurring over the following years.

Corridor management plans. This is used for designated routes to manage preservation efforts (i.e. blending in developments, planting vegetative screening, building berms, etc.). Some areas have adopted protection measures and others have ignored them.

- 5) Scenic designation has no effect on maintenance. Maintenance of signs, etc. is a line item in the budget. 10% of transportation funding goes to enhancement -- but not necessarily the Byways Program.
- 6) In retrospect, California would go for a quality program rather than quantity. Currently, California has 57 scenic byways.
- 7) Response was -- What use is a master plan if time dictates what goes on and what comes off of the master list. The Scenic Byways Program cannot influence demographic or economic trends -- it is more dependent upon these than influential on them. Therefore it is hard to establish a long term master plan or route identification and expect it to work ten years into the future.

Anything that comes from the State, the locals don't want anything to do with. If it is their own idea, or it is generated at the grass roots level, then it typically will work.

- 11) Costs 20,000 - 30,000 dollars and 2-3 years to develop a protection program -- longer if including implementation of land use restrictions, etc.
- 12) No statistics on alternative modes.
- 15) No publicity is given to routes. On Forest Service routes, they have lots of publicity and usage has increased markedly. More FS information is available by calling Pacific Northwest Scenic Byways Coordinator Gary Grogen @ 415-705-2895.
- 17) None to be aware of.

California does color code their signs to identify roads that are not suitable for certain types of travel (RV etc.).

Roads have to be year round and paved to be considered in the Byways Program.

- 20) \$22,000 1/3 of a person year

No money for signing -- each district has an assigned scenic coordinator.

There are no extra maintenance costs involved in the program. Once a sign is placed, there is no replacement.

- 22) No figures on usage.
- 23) No restrictions other than AASHTO.
- 24) None.
- 26) Study is commissioned to determine economic benefits. There is economic benefit, but it requires marketing. Designation alone does not create economic benefit.
- 28) State symbol is used as the logo -- not national logo.
- 29) No specific constraints can be linked directly with designation. However, indirectly, California's Environmental Policy Act does require any highway project to have an EA/EIS prepared that includes a visual assessment. If the assessment identifies a visual impact along a California Scenic Byway, the project must include actions to mitigate the impact. In this sense, the California Byways Program has resulted in a change to the highway construction plan, but it has never been a major problem.
- 30) No studies have been conducted to determine if there has been: 1) an increase in traffic resulting from designation; and 2) an associated deterioration of highway surface conditions that would result in increased maintenance costs.

California would like us to keep in touch with them regarding our solutions to preservation plans. They stressed that preservation has got to begin at the grass-roots level. Will there be mandated local action through state regs? or not.

## UTAH

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- 2) Utah doesn't coordinate at all with neighboring states.
- 3) Primary routes for scenic byways (FHWA) and county for backways.
- 6) Utah is very satisfied with limiting the program to primary arterials and backways.
- 7) Byways and backways will be included in the State's Tourism Master Plan that is being developed.
- 8) Almost everyone had input into the development of the program and designation of routes. An eleven member committee represents the broad spectrum. Public hearings went well and there were very few problems. The committee reviews requests for routes. If any member votes no, then there is a formal hearing that is open to the public. Now the Committee is strictly advisory since no more applications are being accepted.

Utah has 27 byways with no plans to designate more.

- 9) All partners share in the program costs -- federal, state and private included.
- 10) No internal strife -- most roads go through several agency jurisdictions. All agreed up front that all partners in the individual efforts would contribute to maintenance.
- 11) No cost-per-mile estimates. ISTEA money is used to upgrade pullouts, etc.
- 12) Definitely an increase in use by bicyclists. One highway received such an increase that the state is considering the need for a separate bike path.
- 13) Not part of a larger recreational network now, but will be incorporated into the Utah Travel Council statewide recreation plan.
- 14) Byways go through all of the landscape changes. They involve the community up front so that the community thinks it owns the road. No more billboards on byways. They rely on local ordinances to control land use. Haven't had people complaining about losing their personal freedoms or rights. Utah attributes this to the extensive grass roots effort.
- 17) None
- 19) Long 120 miles -- through 3 national parks, 6 state parks, and BLM.  
Short 20 miles
- 22) Traffic usage volumes did increase.

Huntington-Eccles	1989	182,500	1990 designated	1991	379,670
Hwy 12	1989	335,025	1991 designated	1992 Jan-June	234,185

These routes are promoted through Utah Travel and within each travel region. Utah attributes this increase to the promotional effort.

- 23) Some restrictions apply, but not under the program -- AASHTO.
- 24) Doesn't think there is a measurable increase in accidents.
- 25) Because of the steep terrain, weather, etc., Utah has had some problems with foreigners

being afraid of driving.

- 26) Highly publicized roads have definitely benefited local communities greatly. No studies have been done, but the personal communications show the benefits.
- 27) Utah Travel Council logo is used with the words Scenic Byways written in the American Recreation Coalition's Logo.
- 28) Currently there is no corridor management plan for each byway and backway. Utah will be doing management plans for each road, which will include preservation plans.
- 29) No specific constraints can be linked directly with designation. However, special interest groups commonly attempt to use the Program to limit highway construction and improvement projects.
- 30) Although there is a definite increase in traffic following designation, there is very little evidence to prove that deterioration is above and beyond what is anticipated and what the highway was designed for.

## MAINE

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General -- Have a byways program on paper that legislature enacted, but there hasn't been much done with it. They have just received \$500,000 grant, \$100,000 of which is slated for a scenic byways study.

- 2) No coordination with other states.
- 3) 41% on HWS (Highways of National Significance). The rest are part of the STP (Surface Transportation System) system meaning that they are eligible for federal funds.
- 4) Maine has about 200 total miles.
- 6) No one classification is better than the other in terms of management and maintenance.
- 11) Byways are absorbed into the transportation budget.
- 12) Last designated route was in 1982 -- no data for increases in bicycle use.
- 14) All routes are in rural setting. The only issues are the utility line right-of-way changes. They really don't have preservation plans that include any land use restrictions as part of the program, unless the local groups want to take action at that level. But that is changing -  
- Maine will be preparing land use preservation plans in the future.
- 15) No program.
- 17) No liability cases.
- 19) Short 7.9 miles  
Long 48.7 miles  
Avg. 25.3 miles
- 20) Relatively little goes into funding program. Byways are just another responsibility.
- 23) None other than AASHTO.
- 24) No attributable changes.
- 26) The Maine byways are not really conducive to bringing significant economic benefit to any locality or region because of where they are located.
- 27) Not sure.
- 28) \$100,000 grant to develop master plan, corridor management plans -- including preservation plans.
- 29) No specific constraints have been linked directly with designation.
- 30) No studies have been conducted to determine if there has been: 1) an increase in traffic resulting from designation; and 2) an associated deterioration of highway surface conditions that would result in increased maintenance costs. Since Maine does very little promotion of their program, they conclude that there really isn't much of an increase.

## IDAHO

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- 2) No coordination efforts. Locals get together the necessary support and submit their request to the board. 1977 had a study that resulted in 7 designations -- now there are 13 designated routes.
- 3) Idaho doesn't base designation on functional class.
- 4)
  - 11% principal arterials
  - 46% minor arterials
  - 4% major collectors

All routes are on state highways with the exception of 1.  
1110 miles out of 4936 possible have been designated.

- 5) Management and maintenance are incorporated into the highway maintenance plans. However, Idaho has applied for grant money for interpretive facilities on State Highway 75. If they don't get it, it won't be built.
- 6) None.
- 11) None.
- 12) No.
- 13) No, it is just part of a tourism guide/map.
- 14) There is a cooperative agreement required between agencies to define scenic byways. All are rural in nature. A route is automatically excluded if it is in the city limits.
- 15) Just the tourism guide/map.
- 16) Idaho is a very strict state regarding billboards, junk yards, etc. So far they have not had problems with their restrictions. They did have a route past a junk yard, but there was no enforcement efforts taken. Because so many of their byways are on public lands, the laws for those lands often protect the byways within their statutes.
- 19) Long 161.7 miles (Salmon River)  
Short 28.7 miles (Mesa Falls) not on state route  
Avg. 90 miles
- 20) No cost estimates.
- 22) No information -- byways are very crowded, but not necessarily from the designation. FS will have more information on details.
- 26) Although there are no figures, the locals feel that there is definitely an economic benefit to the community. Most of the applications received emphasize economic benefit as one of the top reasons for designation.
- 27) Idaho uses licence plate logo as the byways logo.
- 28) Idaho is seeking some money for a scenic byways guidebook.

The interagency group called the Scenic Byways Work Group is finding it difficult to get projects that are eligible for federal agency match. They are hoping to have this group help identify possible routes.

- 29) Constraints on construction/improvement projects haven't been a factor with designation.
- 30) Idaho hasn't kept track of changes in usage or deterioration resulting from designation.

## WISCONSIN

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- 2) No coordination with neighboring states.
- 3) Roads are local or county -- depending on jurisdiction. No state trunk highways. There have been inquiries for having state roads designated, but to date no action is being planned. This doesn't prohibit Wisconsin from ISTEA funding, but they also don't consider the Rustic Roads as scenic byways.

Wisconsin did look at possibility of proposing a scenic byways program but decided against because of the success of the Rustic Roads Program.

Wisconsin does have an enhancement fund that can be used in part to fund scenic programs.

- 6) Program is 20 years old and considered very successful.
- 7) Wisconsin is a full advocate of the bottoms-up approach. It is a must according to Jane.

Their administrative rules are more suggestive than mandatory. They encourage a petition approach. This allows basic questions to be answered. Public hearings are also encouraged. Local authority has to adopt a resolution that they accept the designation, then it gets forwarded to the Rustic Roads Board for approval.

Interest is generated subtly by the Department through speaking engagements -- usually as an invited speaker -- and through organizations such as the Extension Service, etc.

- 9) No private funding -- DOT is responsible for signing and publishing of Rustic Roads Guide.
- 11) No separate line item in their budget for the Rustic Roads Program. The Rustic Roads National Inventory Case Study on pages 16 and 17 describes some of the expenses -- \$12,000/year for signing and \$9,000/year for replacement. The local districts are responsible for maintenance.
- 12) Wisconsin's last designation was December 7, 1993. There is no way of estimating whether there has been an increase in bicycle traffic. The roads are very popular and have been for years. No study was ever done.
- 13) No contained system.
- 14) The Rustic Roads is primarily rural in nature, but some do go through villages or suburbs. Overall system is rural, but there is some industrial passage.

There is a provision in the administrative codes for land use restrictions -- but they are more encouraged than mandated. Local zoning, set back regs...may be used to protect and preserve the rustic character.

- 15) The Rustic Roads Guide is more of an educational tool rather than promotional. Write-in only and at DOT tourist stops. No paid advertising, marketing, etc.
- 17) None.

- 18) Department of Development/Tourism may want an occasional slide or something for a presentation, but otherwise there is very little interaction.

I mentioned the interest in Montana expressed by the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks regarding a cooperative effort. Wisconsin's response was that it's a good idea but somewhat of a catch-22. As other agencies get involved, complications begin to arise regarding funding, coordination, maintenance, etc. Maybe a two tiered system would work cooperatively with the more rustic tier being the format for coordination.

- 19) Short 1.8 miles  
Long 26 miles  
Average 5 miles

All Rustic Roads are supposed to be a minimum of 2 miles. Wisconsin feels that the ideal lengths are above 20 miles.

- 20) 10-15% of one Full-Time Employee's (FTE) time is allocated for the Rustic Roads Program.

- 22) No information. Size of the Rustic Roads often is too narrow for RV's.

- 23) No restrictions other than bridge limitations.

- 24) No real increase in accidents. There are no overlooks, pullouts, etc. If accidents do occur on these routes it is because of the geometrics and alignment nature of the rural roads...not from designation per se.

Of the 305 miles of Rustic Roads, 197 miles are locals, 65 are minor collectors, 42 major collectors and 1/2 is arterial.

- 26) Not all communities have the same reasons for designation. Some feel designation would bring economic benefit to smaller communities or bedroom communities. Others feel that designation is a way of preserving a road from improvement and higher speeds.

- 27) Rustic Roads logo.

- 28) No real changes are planned. The state is doing multi-modal planning but they don't think that will impact the Rustic Roads program very much.

- 29) Constraints on construction/improvement projects haven't been a factor with designation.

- 30) Wisconsin has no record of deterioration resulting from designation and increased usage.

## WASHINGTON

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General: Program started in 1967 with the Highway Beautification Act. State legislation was passed in Washington with DOT as administrators. In 1971 the Scenic Vistas Act prohibited billboards on certain highways. In 1990 reinvigorated program due to National Scenic Byways Program. In 1991 a new study was completed to review designations on state highways. 45% are now scenic and recreational highways.

In July, the Highway Heritage Program combined with the Scenic and Recreational Highways to create the Heritage Corridors Program. It is still a "program on paper" with limited physical manifestations, e.g., no signs on roads.

- 1) Grand ideas of protecting scenic quality; providing opportunities for travelers to rest and learn; and to partner with other groups in joint projects.

### Four Programs:

- o Public Outreach - newsletters
  - o Rest Area Programming - kiosks, info.
  - o Route Designation and Evaluation - cooperative work to determine routes
  - o Signs, Markers, Interpretation - brochures, etc.
- 2) California, Oregon, and Washington proposed the Tri-State Pacific (Coastal) Route along Highway 101. Received \$4 million from ISTEA. Consultant team now hired.
  - 3) Presently on state highways. Working to include local roads. Possibly two-tiered system.
  - 4) 45% of existing state highways are designated.
  - 5) Not documented; vandalism a bit worse near cities. A study is underway to learn more.
  - 6) A variety of roads is good.
  - 7) Have never had a master plan. Now trying to coordinate with other agencies to develop a plan and management program. Did have a formal study process in 1991.
  - 8) Not much originally, however increasing now. Newsletter, Highway Heritage Report circulated. Invite participation in specific projects. Public was involved in workshops for the Cultural, Natural and Historic Resources Policy now going to State Legislature. Public heavily involved in the Second Greenway (Route 90). Developing strategy to involve and respond to the public.
  - 9) 1967 - 1990 administered with DOT funds - basically one person's salary.  
In 1990 and 1991 legislature study money available ( $\pm$  \$100,000/year).  
In 1992 the transportation budget gave \$360,000 to match (20%) ISTEA funds for the Pacific Trail.  
  
Presently applying for dedicated funding through the Heritage Corridor Act., e.g., use fees from LOGO program.
  - 10) The new Secretary for Transportation is very open to expanding the role and responsibilities of the Department. Even so, they only get a fraction of the total DOT budget.
  - 11) No.

- 12/13) They generally promote alternative transportation and always look for opportunities to develop trail systems. Not necessarily formalized. The Heritage Program component incorporates interpretative signs, rest areas, RV dump, kiosks, etc. There is a "free coffee" program where non-profit groups have a booth to provide coffee as a community service. A secondary benefit is fund raising and publicity.
- 14) Mostly have natural scenery. A few small towns included - need more info.
- 15) No.
- 16) Don't have any except billboard control. Introducing idea of scenic highway corridor overlay to interested groups.
- 17) Unknown.
- 18) Presently working with several agencies to develop task force for ongoing designation and management of byways.
- 19) Each is a road segment. These may connect to each other.  
SR -122 = 7.8 miles  
Columbia R SR = 161
- 20) Varies with programs.
- 21) Presently 2 staff members; until 1991 there was only 1. New manager to be appointed.
- 22-26) Unknown.
- 27) Have a brown sign that says Scenic and Recreational Highway - with evergreen tree and mountain. However, not used or representative of State. Hope a new one will be developed.
- 28) Follow 4 prongs.  
Partnership work group for future designations. Plan for management of program., e.g., signs, brochures, etc.
- 29) No specific constraints can be linked directly with designation. However, some in the engineering side would like to use that argument. Interest groups tend to try and use byways as a way of blocking development. Hasn't ever worked.
- 30) Since routes aren't really promoted, there are no figures on increases with designation.

## ***COLORADO***

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- 1) See Program Description
- 2) Has talked with Utah - Their program started more with tourism and marketing. Byways selected with local input. Has many more than Colorado.  
New Mexico - is considering a program.  
Arizona - has parkways but no formal program.  
Long term goal to establish a four corner States Anasazi Trail linking historic sites such as Mesa Verde.
- 3) All eligible. They try to create linked systems, e.g., part of an interstate is included as it's part of a historic route. However, they try to avoid interstates. Turned town Glenwood Canyon. Also have some four-wheel drive roads.
- 4) 80% of routes are on primary or secondary roads.
- 5) Not much difference between routes -- not much difference from non-byways. Only real problem is that signs are stolen or shot. Maybe a little more on county roads.
- 6) Heavy commuter roads and interstate are NOT appropriate.
- 7) They didn't have a master plan, but they did have an overall concept. Definitely a benefit to have a master plan. They established a mission and policy statement, as well as five criteria. It was important to cover the whole State, and to represent the different landscape types and historical themes, e.g., Leadville area-mining history; San Luis Valley - Hispanic culture.
- 8) From the beginning it was initiated by local communities. The program began because so many groups were trying to get roads designated (through the legislature) that a task force was established to manage the program as a whole. The whole program is based on grass-roots involvement. Once it was set up, nomination packages were sent everywhere, e.g., chambers of commerce, historical societies, community organizations, etc. People really worked together to develop routes for nominations. When two routes met, those groups worked together, happy to spread resources. Now there is less action, although each byway has a committee or task force. Some are more active than others. The next step will be for each group to develop a "Byway Partnership Management Plan".
- 9) 80% ISTEIA, matched by DOT, Historical Society. Tourism used to be the third member, but now Natural Resources will be approached. Each pays about \$5,000.  
  
The total of \$75,000 is mostly Sally's salary. Local groups buy signs at \$75.00 each, DOT put them up and helps administer the grants. Other funding sources are GO Colorado and ISTEIA enhancement funds. The Historical Society raised \$1 million for a comprehensive interpretive program throughout the State, coordinating with byways.
- 10) Not mostly state funds.
- 11) No.
- 12) Lots of cyclists, but don't know if the number is affected by designation - attractive routes attract recreationists. Most byways have bike paths or shoulders. There are new studies, e.g., Telluride Trail. Mt. Evans has bike conflicts.

- 13) Haven't really coordinated with trails groups, but expect more to happen as Colorado does statewide trails planning. Recreation is a big component of the byways, e.g., access to Arkansas River headwaters, opportunities to disperse recreation, etc.
- 14) All types of scenery are included. They are working with improving coordination with landowners.
- 15) No. The Tourism Board is no longer a member. There is money for a brochure. Mainly, they feel they don't need any more publicity. People are already finding the routes. They aren't ready for too many more visitors.
- 16) Land use control is a touchy subject. It is presented as an option but is not mandatory. Control is exercised through possible de-designation. Billboards were a big issue. None may be removed, but under new law, no more may be erected on byways. Designate towns etc. in byway to avoid any more billboards. Their new program for Byway Partnership Management Plans will recommend optional land use controls (Mike Strueger of the Land Resource Center, working for Sharkey-Walker).
- 17) None known.
- 18) Other involved agencies are: Dept. of Local Affairs, Natural Resources, BLM, USFS, State Historic and Tourism Board, State Parks, Division of Wildlife. Talking of developing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for defining roles.
- 19) Shortest - 14 miles  
Longest - 235 miles  
Average - 100 miles
- 20) \$75,000 year budget. Mostly Sally's salary.
- 21) Sally is only "full-time" (officially 75%) person. There is a commission of 14-15 people appointed by the governor. They meet once a month. They select consultants and byways. Not involved in day-to-day decisions, but have good contacts. All the rest is done at the local level.
- 22) No real studies - seems visitor numbers are increasing.
- 23) No, but don't choose heavily traveled areas.
- 24) Not known.
- 25) There is one one-way four-wheel drive road that is being improved with grading and safety pull-outs to handle the traffic volumes.
- 26) Columbine (blue sign).
- 27) Trying to set up all byways to manage on own.  
All byways to develop management plans.  
There is a consultant hired to help.  
Will recommend task forces to run byways. May consist of county and municipal officials, land managers (USFS), service providers, historical society, chamber and tourism.  
Increase visitor opportunities.  
Let groups pursue national designations if they wish.
- 29) No specific constraints can be linked directly with designation. Colorado developed a policy statement and reinforced it with enabling legislation stating up-front that the Byways Program will not block improvements.

- 30) Most byways have seen an increase in usage since designation. Although Colorado has no usage statistics, they estimate there is a 30%-40% increase following designation. This information comes from their local byways organizations that do a good job of keeping track of that type of information. Most byways are on roads that traditionally, have been less traveled. So no increased deterioration has been noticed. Colorado is pursuing the development of a baseline evaluation so that they can begin tracking this information. In retrospect, they wish a baseline evaluation would have been conducted with program development.

**APPENDIX B**

**ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE  
INFORMATION  
PACKET**

**INCLUDES:**

**Minutes to the first  
Advisory Committee  
meeting**

**Association news clip**

**Press release**



SCENIC BYWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes/Synopsis  
January 31, 1994

The Advisory Committee for the Montana Department of Transportation Scenic Byways Feasibility Study Project met at 10AM in the Highway Commission Room at the Department of Transportation offices in Helena on January 31, 1994. Those present were:

Presenters

Marvin Dye, Director, MDT  
Pat Saindon, Administrator, Transportation Planning Div., MDT  
Dick Turner, Transportation Planner, MDT  
Bill Cloud, Supervisor of Special Studies Section, MDT  
Clint Erb, Project Coordinator, Morrison-Maierle Environmental Corp.  
Gloria Hermanson, Project Team Member, Communications Strategies  
Linda Brander, Project Team Member, Communications Strategies

Advisory Committee Members or Representatives

Pat Joyce, (rep. Homer Staves, Nat'l. Scenic Byways Advisory Committee)  
Clint Blackwood, MT Department of Commerce, Travel Montana  
Bill Harper, U. S. Forest Service  
Gary Gilmore, MT Department of Transportation  
Dave Miller, Federal Highways Administration  
Wesley Choc, AAA Montana  
Marcella Sherfy, MT Historical Society  
John Bloomquist, Montana Stockgrowers Association  
Petty Trenk, Western Environmental Trade Association  
John Williams, Bicycle Federation of America  
Jim Binando (rep. John Kwialkowski, Bureau of Land Mgt.)  
Bob Walker, MT Dept. of Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Eddie Lopez, National Parks  
Senator Don Bianchi, Legislature  
Wesley Main, Native American Tribes  
Cheryl Beatty, MT Association of Counties  
Aidan Myhre, Outdoor Advertising  
Doug Smith, MT Association of Planners  
Cordell Ringel, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Guests

Duncan Adams, Montana Magazine

Advisory Committee Members Not In Attendance

Kim Schulke, MT Motor Carriers Association  
Louise Bruce, MT Wilderness Association  
Dottie Maitland, Tourism

### **Welcoming Remarks:**

Following introductions by Pat Saindon, MDT Director Marvin Dye welcomed those present to the first meeting of the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee and thanked the members for agreeing to participate in the project.

Director Dye brought out a number of questions he felt must be addressed before the state decides whether to proceed with the actual development of a scenic byways program. They included:

- . Can Montana afford to create, manage, and promote a scenic byways program?
- . What can we learn from other states?
- . What sort of program would entice visitors to extend their Montana stay? Should we develop a program that diverts travelers from heavily traveled routes to lesser-traveled, equally scenic routes?
- . Are we nearing the saturation point for routes with special designations or signing? Most of Montana's major highways already have special designations. For example, portions of I-15 between Butte and Great Falls are recognized on six different systems. Can we develop and sign an additional system without confusing the average traveler?
- . How do we coordinate a state program with the Forest Service, BLM, and AAA programs?
- . How should we position our program with respect to the National Scenic Byways Program?
- . Should we pursue National Scenic Byway or All American Road designation for some of our most spectacular roads?
- . How do we approach the extremely sensitive corridor protection issue? Can we protect the scenic values that make our roads worth traveling without detracting from other essential economic activities?
- . How do we develop objective selection of criteria for designation?
- . Will scenic byway designation increase accidents on mountain roads? Who will be held liable for accidents?
- . What legislation is needed to grant authority to the Department of Transportation and Highway Commission to designate state scenic byways?

Director Dye indicated past attempts to create a state program have failed because resources were not available to address these and other questions. The passage of ISTEA and acquisition of the FHWA grant now allows the Department to work with a specialized consulting team to help deal with the issues involved in making an informed decision on whether to proceed with the development of a Montana Scenic Byways Program.

### **History of Montana's Byways Efforts**

Bill Cloud informed participants that about forty states currently have scenic byways programs. Montana's efforts date back to about 1965 when the Bureau of Public Roads attempted to develop a priority list of Montana's scenic highways. Based on input from several sources, this resulted in a list of 70 routes totaling approximately 1,893 miles.

Between 1974 and 1977, the Department of Highways Planning and Research Bureau again looked at a possibility of a scenic byways program for Montana. They considered only the routes included in the 1965 study and determined that 70 routes were too many. Criteria established to reduce that number included:

- . road must be paved;
- . must be an alternative route connecting to arterial highways;
- . routes must be a reasonable length;
- . 10 add'l criteria ranging from safety issues to provision of amenities.

It was decided there was no pressing need to establish scenic routes and the subject was apparently dropped until 1990 when the issue was revisited. Some concerns that surfaced then included maintenance demands, routing traffic to inadequate routes, sign clutter, increased demand for tourist amenities, and associated costs for signing and roadway betterments.

There is currently one state scenic route, the Pintler, 60 miles long, approved by the Commission in 1977 as a five-year pilot project that involved signing only. At the end of the five years, the signs were left in place due to political pressure and remain there today.

The U. S. Forest Service has five designated scenic byways and the Bureau of Land Management has three backcountry byways. Those routes are shown on the map included in material previously sent to Advisory Committee members.

The National Scenic Byways Program was established in 1991 by the passage of ISTEA, which also generated available funding for state studies. In September of 1992 Montana received a \$165,000 federal grant with a 20% required state match to hire consultants to conduct a thorough study on the feasibility of a scenic byways program in Montana at this point.

### **Role of the Advisory Committee**

Gloria Hermanson told the group the reason for the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee is to have a constituent-oriented "sounding board" for ideas and recommendations presented by the consultants as they work through all the different aspects of feasibility for a program in Montana.

She indicated attempt was made to develop a committee representing as many interested constituencies as possible - maintaining a reasonable group size with myriad perspectives including geographic.

This first meeting was arranged for information and orientation purposes only. Future meetings will be facilitated work sessions at key points in the study process. There will be two additional meetings for sure and possibly a third at the end of the project. Although meeting attendance is voluntary, she reminded Committee members that active participation in the advisory process is the best way to effectively represent member constituencies. Subsequent meetings will be held in Helena at a location yet to be announced. Meetings will be prefaced by an agenda and background information

on discussion items.

The Advisory Committee does not serve as a voting body. It is strictly advisory. To that end, the facilitators will work to achieve consensus on all issues. When consensus is not possible, other potential outcomes are a call for further information and/or research, or a list of prioritized alternate recommendations. It was recommended that Committee members be prepared to poll their constituencies on issues prior to meeting dates.

### **Review of National Program**

At Congressional direction, in 1990 FHWA:

- . inventoried existing scenic byways;
- . developed guidelines for a National Scenic Byway Program;
- . conducted case studies of economic impact of scenic byways on travel and tourism;
- . analyzed potential safety problems and associated environmental impacts.

The study did not make recommendations, but did provide options for a national program, pointing out the need for state and local governments to take a lead role.

With the passage of ISTEA in 1991, the National Scenic Byways Program Advisory Committee was asked to recommend to the Secretary of Transportation minimum criteria for a National Program, specifically:

- . operation and management standards for designated byways including strategies for maintaining or improving scenic qualities;
- . standards for byway signing;
- . safety standards;
- . design review standards;
- . procedures for reviewing and terminating byway designations.

The final report to the Secretary and Congress will probably be released in February and available to the public soon after. FHWA will then begin to develop program details in cooperation with states and other interested parties, with program kickoff sometime in 1995.

A consolidated list of National Scenic Byways Program Advisory Committee Draft Recommendations is attached.

Homer Staves (member of Montana's Advisory Committee) is a member of the National Committee. Although not present at this meeting, he submitted the following points regarding the National program:

- . emphasis on tourism, not as a means to lockup and stop development of any area;
- . routes on the national system should be the best;
- . there should be no national designation without state support and no state sponsorship without strong local support;
- . there should be a corridor management plan for each byway;
- . states should set up ongoing advisory councils to review applications for national designation.

**Overview of State and General Profiles and Potential Ramifications of the Project**  
Clint Erb, Project Coordinator from Morrison-Maierle Environmental Corporation, discussed the six-step structure of Montana's study process:

- 1) selection and appointment of Scenic Byways Advisory Committee;
- 2) assess ramifications of a State Scenic Byways Program;
- 3) identify options for accommodating increased tourism;
- 4) establish criteria for defining and terminating state scenic byways designations;
- 5) identify alternatives;
- 6) develop issues, management, and preservation strategies.

He presented an overview of current profiles of seven other states. Those state coordinators were asked 28 questions about their programs. A synopsis of the findings is attached.

In discussing potential ramifications of the conceptual program, Clint detailed nine issues:

- 1) program public acceptance
- 2) designated routes
- 3) land use controls and other protective measures
- 4) socioeconomic
- 5) highway safety
- 6) legal/liability
- 7) short and long-term maintenance
- 8) short and long-term administration
- 9) short and long-term funding.

A more detailed synopsis of those potential ramifications is attached.

### **Next Steps**

The next meeting will be a work session on criteria development, with the following meeting to center on alternatives. Tentative dates for future meetings are March 21, May 9, and June 13 (if a wrap-up meeting is felt necessary).

A meeting synopsis will be sent to all Committee members, along with generic newsletter articles for members' use in Association newsletters. A press release will be distributed to the media regarding this meeting and the study process.

## SCENIC BYWAYS FEASIBILITY STUDY UNDERWAY

What kind of scenic byways program would work best in a diverse state such as Montana? What has worked well in other states? What would it cost to manage a scenic byway program? If a program were to be instituted, how should scenic routes be protected?

These are just some of the questions to be addressed during a feasibility study on a potential scenic byways program for Montana. The study has been undertaken by the Montana Department of Transportation with a consulting team comprised of Morrison-Maierle Environmental Corporation, Communications Strategies, Design Workshop, and Mother Earth Consulting. The team is helping the Department address potential designation and de-designation criteria, preservation plans, alternative design scenarios, and implementation strategies.

To ensure involvement of interested constituencies and provide a forum for interested parties, a 22-member advisory committee has been created. The Committee will act as a sounding board for ideas and recommendations presented by the consultants as they work through the different aspects of feasibility for a Montana Scenic Byways Program. The committee is comprised of representatives from Federal and State agencies, recreation and environmental organizations, timber and agriculture interests, local governments, Native Americans, and private sector companies.

(YOUR NAME) has been appointed to represent the (INDUSTRY OR ORGANIZATION). As the (INDUSTRY OR ORGANIZATION) representative, (YOUR NAME) will have the opportunity to provide input to the Department of Transportation regarding community or individual concerns, signing coordination, design & safety matters, corridor management plans, promotional strategies, and other issues that could be industry-related.

The Advisory Committee is tentatively scheduled for working sessions on March 21 and May 9. The feasibility study report is expected to be complete by the end of June.

At the conclusion of the study, the Montana Department of Transportation will have the information necessary to determine if a scenic byways program is feasible in Montana. If it is, the Montana Department of Transportation will move forward with legislative initiatives and route inventories necessary for the development of a Montana Scenic Byways Program.

For more information or to provide input, contact (YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:  
BILL CLOUD - MT DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION 444-7646  
DENNIS UNSWORTH - MT DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION 444-6200

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCENIC BYWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTED

Director of Transportation, Marvin Dye, today announced the creation of a 22 member Scenic Byways Advisory Committee. The announcement marks the first step in the Department's efforts to evaluate the potential for a Scenic Byways Program in Montana.

A consultant team, comprised of Morrison-Maierle Environmental Corporation, Communications Strategies and Design Workshop will assist the Department throughout the research and planning process. The process will result in suggested route designation and de-designation criteria, preservation plans, alternative design scenarios, and implementation strategies. Inventory and designation of specific routes won't be addressed by this phase of the study, according to Bill Cloud, MDT Special Studies Section Supervisor.

The Advisory Committee, comprised of representatives from federal and state agencies, recreation and environmental organizations, agriculture, local governments, Native American tribes, and private sector companies, will serve as a constituency-oriented "sounding board" for ideas, findings and recommendations presented by the study team, Cloud said. The following people have been appointed to the Committee:

Homer Staves, VP Customer Relations  
Kampgrounds of America

Peggy Trenk, Exec. Dir.  
Western Environ. Trade Assn.

Clint Blackwood, Travel Montana  
Montana Department of Commerce

Dottie Maitland  
Maitland & Associates

Bill Harper  
U.S. Forest Service, Regional Office

John Williams  
Bicycle Federation of Amer.

Dave Miller, Planning Engineer  
U.S. Department of Transportation

Louise Bruce, President  
Montana Wilderness Assn.

Wesley Choc, President  
AAA Montana

John Kwialkowski  
Bureau of Land Management

Marcella Sherfy  
Montana Historical Society

Bob Walker  
Montana Dept. of Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks

John Bloomquist  
Montana Stockgrower's Assn.

Senator Don Bianchi  
Belgrade, MT

Gary Gilmore, Operations Engineer  
Montana Department of Transportation

Cordell Ringel  
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Cheryl Beatty  
Montana Association of Counties

Eddie Lopez  
Grant Kohrs Ranch

Wesley Main  
American Indian Technology  
Transfer Center

Aidan Myhre  
Myhre Advertising

Kim Schulke  
Montana Motor Carriers Assn.

Doug Smith  
Montana Assn. of Planners

The Committee's first meeting was January 31, to be followed by a number of working sessions between now and June to provide information and discuss associated issues. Input from the Advisory Committee will be used to help formulate recommendations for a scenic byways plan for Montana.

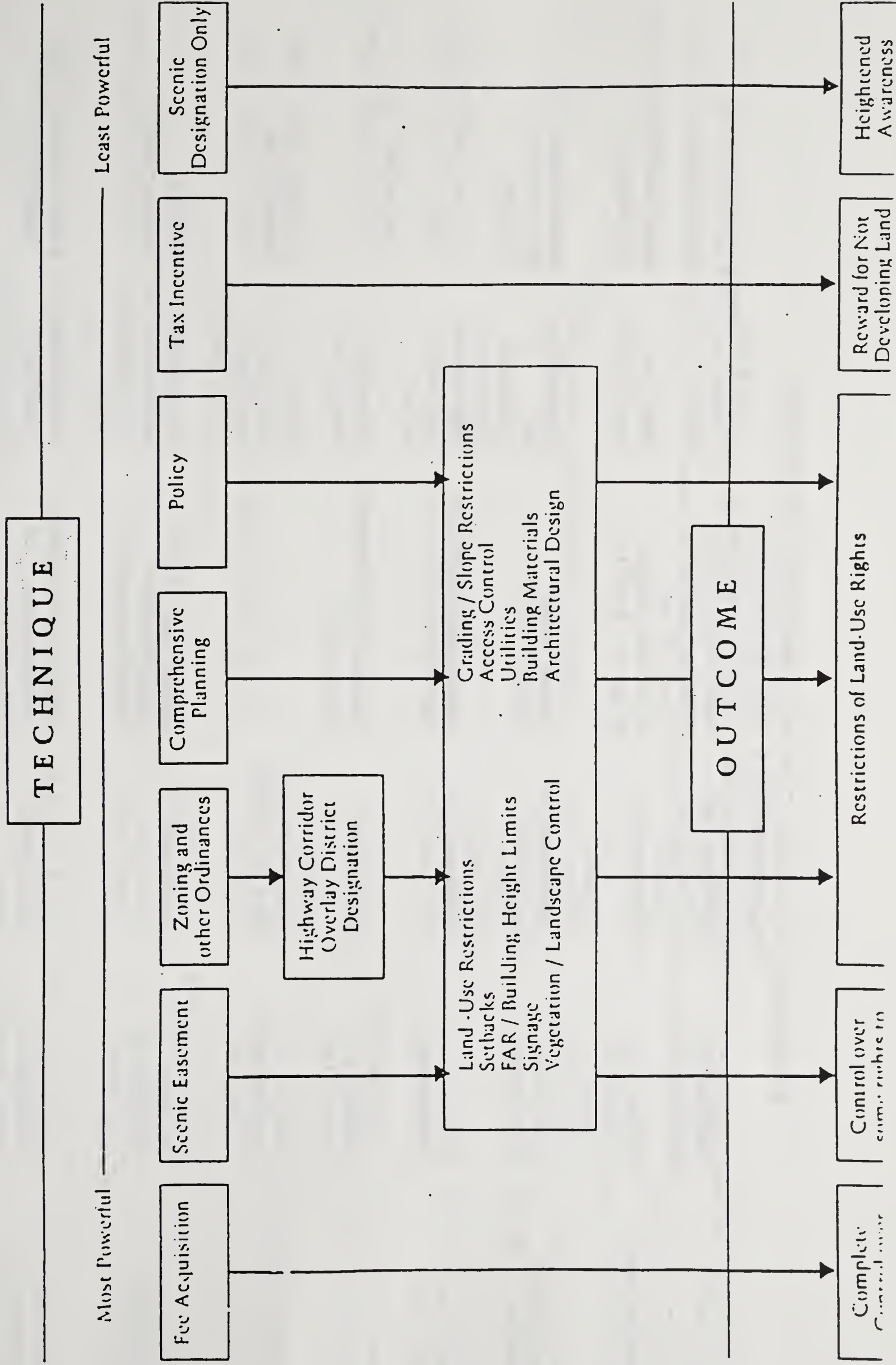
For further information or to provide input, call the Montana Department of Transportation at 444-7289 or contact one of the Advisory Committee Members.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **RESOURCE PROTECTION TECHNIQUES**



# CONTINUUM OF RESOURCE PROTECTION TECHNIQUES



# EVALUATION OF SCENIC RESOURCE PROTECTION TECHNIQUES FOR FEASIBILITY AND APPLICATION

Technique	Degree of Protection	Duration of Protection	Ease of Administration	Cost	Precedents
Fee Simple Acquisition (3.1.1)	Fully Protected	Permanent	On-Going Mgmt. Tied to Public	Most Expensive	Most Public Parkways
Lease-Purchase Agreements (3.1.2)	Fully Protected	Long-Term/Permanent	Lease Term Negotiable	Expensive But Flexible	Numerous Non-Profit Groups
Bargain Sale (3.1.3)	Fully Protected	Permanent	Requires Purchase Coordination	Expensive But Good Value	Big Sur Land Trust
Donation (3.1.4)	Fully Protected	Permanent	Depends on Owner Occupancy	None to Recipient	
Land Trust (3.1.5)	Fully Protected	Permanent if Land Is Held		Value Depends on Purchase Opportunity	Jackson Hole, WY Land Trust
Revolving Fund (3.1.6)	Fully Protected	Permanent	Requires Close Timing and Coordination	Depends on Amount Available in Fund	Nature Conservancy
Purchase of Development Rights (3.2.1)	Selected Land Protected from Dvlpmnt.	Could Change with Land Sale	Requires Gov't. Program to Support It	Moderately Costly, Depending on Land Uses	King County, WA (Seattle)

Source: Scenic Resource Protection Techniques and Tools, 1990.

Technique	Degree of Protection	Duration of Protection	Ease of Administration	Cost	Precedents
Land Banking (3.2.2)	Fully Protected	Permanent	Requires Long-Term Commitment	Requires Substantial Funding	Used in France, Sweden, Denmark
Transfer of Development Rights (3.2.3)	Selected Lands Protected From Dvlpmnt.	Could Be Changed Upon Appeal	Requires Gov't. Program to Support It	Moderate. Depends on Land Uses	Montgomery Cty, MD
Deed Restrictions (3.2.4)	Limited Protection	Control is Transferred with Owner Change	Relatively Simple	Minimal	Most local land trusts
Scenic Easements (3.3.1)	Limited Protection	On-Going	Relatively Simple	Minimal	Great River Road; Petoskey, MI
Zoning Ordinances (3.3.2)	Limited	Subject to Appeal and Frequent Change	Standard for Local Governments	No Public Sector Cost	Most Local Gov'ts.
Overlay Zoning (3.3.3)	Focused on Critical Areas	Subject to Appeal and Change	Additional Inventory Required	Minimal Extra Costs	Local Gov'ts.
Scenic Highway Districts (3.3.4)	Limited	Subject to Change	Amendment to Zoning Map	Minimal	Charleston Co., SC
Agricultural Districts (3.3.5)	Voluntary	Depends on Pressure for Development	State or Local Gov't. Program Required	Loss of Some State Tax Base	State of NY

Technique	Degree of Protection	Duration of Protection	Ease of Administration	Cost	Precedents
Subdivision Regulations (3.4.1)	Limited in Scale and Scope	At Time of Development Approval Only	Standard for Local Gov'ts.	No Add'l. Public Sector Costs	Most Local Gov'ts.
Cluster Development (3.4.2)	Depends on Project Design	Life of the Development	Can Be Incorporated into Local Plan	Minimal	Lincoln, MA
Development Moratoria (3.4.3)	Very Limited	Temporary Only	Minimal	No Public Cost	Many local govt's
Preferential Assessment (3.5.1)	Limited; Depends on Land Markets	Year-to-Year	Can Be Tied into the Assessment Administration	Some Lost Tax Revenues	17 states including AZ, CO, IA, MS
Circuit Breaker Tax Credit (3.5.2)	Somewhat Limited	Typically 5-7 Years	Requires Admin. Support to Tax Program	Some Lost Revenues	States of MI, WI
Comprehensive Plans (3.6.1)	Fair-Good	5 Year Planning Cycle	Part of Established Local Gov't. Process	No Add'l. Public Sector Cost	Most Local Gov'ts.
Environmental Reviews (3.6.2)	Fair	Stops Short-Term Development Impact	Part of Public Planning Process	No Add'l. Public Sector Cost	Calif. State Env. Policy Act
Sign Control Ordinances (3.7)	Good	Determined by Each Community	Part of Local Ordinances	Minimal	Most Local Gov't's.
View Protection Ordinances (3.8.1)	Very Good	Determined by Each	Local Ordinance Administration	Minimal	Denver; Austin, TX

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Roadway Design Alternatives**



MONTANA DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION

SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM

*Task 3: Accommodating Increased Tourism  
Roadway Design Alternatives*



*Prepared by: Design Workshop, Inc.*

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM**

**TASK #3  
ROADWAY DESIGN ALTERNATIVES**

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**Road Types and Associated Facilities**

**Scenic Road Classification Systems**

**Anticipated Impacts on Scenic Route Categories**

**Minimum Standards for Design Elements and Auxiliary Features**

**Highway Costs for Scenic Byways**

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| 2 | Scenic Byway Classification Systems Based on Existing Functional Classifications |
| 3 | Road Types and Associated Facilities                                             |
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## INTRODUCTION

The range of scenic byways - from interstate to unsurfaced roads - is as great as the vast distance that separates these two illustrations.



*Interstate 77 in Virginia was built as two individual roadways to avoid disturbing the natural landscape and preserve its beauty.*



*A typical dirt road in the American Flats Bureau of Land Management Recreation Area in Southwest Colorado.*

**Figure 1: Diverse Road Types**  
*Source: National Scenic Byways Study*

A scenic road or byway is defined as a road having roadsides or corridors of high natural beauty and cultural or historic value. It gives the traveler glimpses of nature, history, geology, landscaping, and cultural activities along the road. Campgrounds, picnic areas, or other recreational sites may be built within the scenic corridor, or the road may provide a pleasant access to such facilities.

Thus, the location and surrounds of the road are the key factors which make it eligible as a scenic byway. The actual type of road may vary based on specific criteria and concerns of the authorizing agency. While the majority of scenic byways are paired two lane roads, certain interstates or one lane gravel roads may also be designated as scenic byways. Some states, Utah for example, actually separate their scenic road program into two categories, to accommodate the different levels of development of the roads.

This analysis will focus on road design standards specifically in relation to scenic routes. First, it addresses *Road Design* factors which are key to successfully integrating a road into its environment, thus allowing it to be eligible for scenic designation. Second, *Road Engineering* factors including safety, maintenance and cost are addressed. Third, a matrix and illustrations describe the range of *Road Types and Associated Facilities* that are available. The above three categories are then brought together and directly related to scenic road classifications and standards, in the following sections:

- *Scenic Road Classification Systems;*
- *Anticipated Impacts on Scenic Route Categories;*
- *Minimum Standards for Design Elements and Auxiliary Features;*
- *Highway Costs for Scenic Byways.*

## **ROAD DESIGN FACTORS**

Table 1 shows road characteristics and elements in relation to important overall aspects of scenic route designation. It is important to use a total planning concept, for example, as applied by the Forest Service in designing, constructing, maintaining, and enhancing visual and scenic quality for the road corridor.

*The Environment:* is key to establishing the character of a scenic route and a wide variety of environmental types exist. Sometimes, the type of environment influences the type of road. For example, a remote wilderness area with difficult terrain may be accessed with a small gravel road, while a rural area with rolling terrain connecting several urban centers, may have a four lane highway. It is important to consider the appropriate road type in relation to its environment and to minimize disturbance of natural resources. Figure 2 illustrates the variety of environmental resources which contribute to the creation of a scenic byway.

*Visual Resources:* The goal of a scenic byway is to create visual access to scenic and interesting sites, therefore it is critical to design and maintain the road to maximize visual resources.

*The User and Volume of Use:* further dictate the size and shape of highways, however this should be balanced with potential environmental effects.

*Detailed Design Considerations:* Road alignment is a key factor in successful design and the key is to carefully coordinate horizontal and vertical alignments. Cross section design will assist in wedding the roadways to the landscape. Ditches and culverts should be appropriately designed. Successful grading and blending with the natural environment are a result of correct application of the above concepts which results in a rhythm in the road.

Road facilities such as intersections, pull-outs, and rest stops should be suitably spaced. Medians may be provided to enhance several lane highways. Pavement width should be considered in evaluating the overall effect of the road in the landscape.

Table 1: Selected Scenic Road Elements

Elements	General Objectives	Characteristics
NATIONAL DESIGNATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance general awareness of scenic highways, cultural, and historic places, etc.</li> <li>• Improve quality of scenic highway experience</li> <li>• Close information gap on available experiences and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs and markers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Routes</li> <li>— Directional</li> <li>— Complementary facilities</li> <li>— Information displays</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Maps and brochures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— National maps</li> <li>— State maps</li> <li>— Route maps and brochures</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Media actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Information centers</li> <li>— Publicity and advertising</li> <li>— User aids</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
CORRIDOR PROTECTION AND SCENIC ENHANCEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preserve highly scenic corridors</li> <li>• Enhance scenic quality of corridors</li> <li>• Protect ecology and land forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenic enhancement and preservation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Easements</li> <li>— Landscaping—trees and shrubs planted, trees removed</li> <li>— Billboard control</li> <li>— Junkyard screening and removal</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Corridor protection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Restraints—access control</li> <li>— Ecological stabilization—use of shrubs and other plants, drainage</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
COMPLEMENTARY FACILITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote multiple use of scenic corridors for recreation</li> <li>• Enhance quality of recreation experience</li> <li>• Increase availability and types of complementary facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scenic highway support facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Scenic overlooks</li> <li>— Rest stops</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Recreation facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Picnic areas</li> <li>— Water recreation facilities</li> <li>— Cultural/historic sites</li> <li>— Walkways/bikeways</li> <li>— Campgrounds</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
URBAN EMPHASIS AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve quality of urban recreation and scenic highway experiences</li> <li>• Fulfill greater percentage of urban recreation needs within urban boundaries</li> <li>• Conserve energy without reducing urban service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban service: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Designation of incremental urban miles</li> <li>— Additional lanes</li> <li>— Operation of scenic bus service</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Energy efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Bus lanes</li> <li>— Increase in vehicle occupancy</li> <li>— Bikeways</li> <li>— Closer-in complementary facilities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
NATIONAL CONNECTIVITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect more people to recreation areas</li> <li>• Provide scenic experience for non-recreation everyday driving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreation connectivity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Additional lanes</li> <li>— Operation of buses</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Urban and arterial connectivity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Additional lanes</li> <li>— Operation of buses</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Source: Assessment of the Feasibility of Developing a National Scenic Highway System, Report to Congress, Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, Washington, D.C., September 25, 1974.

**WATER**  
Rivers, Lakes, Waterfalls,  
Rapids, Beaches, Marshes,  
Islands, Dams, Canals, Locks,  
Harbors, Lighthouses.



**TOPOGRAPHY**  
Mountains, Canyons,  
Geologic Formations,  
Golf Courses, and other  
Specialty Graded Sports  
Areas.



**FAUNA**  
Wildlife Areas, Hunting  
Preserves, Livestock  
Grazing Areas, Pastures.



**VEGETATION**  
Forest, Prairies,  
Orchards, Active Farm  
Croplands, Tree Farms.



**HISTORIC & CULTURAL**  
Forts, Battlefields, Old  
Mills, Covered Bridges,  
Mines, Ghost Towns,  
Plantations.



**RECREATION**  
Camp Grounds, Picnic Areas,  
Boating, Gold Panning,  
Rock Collecting Areas.



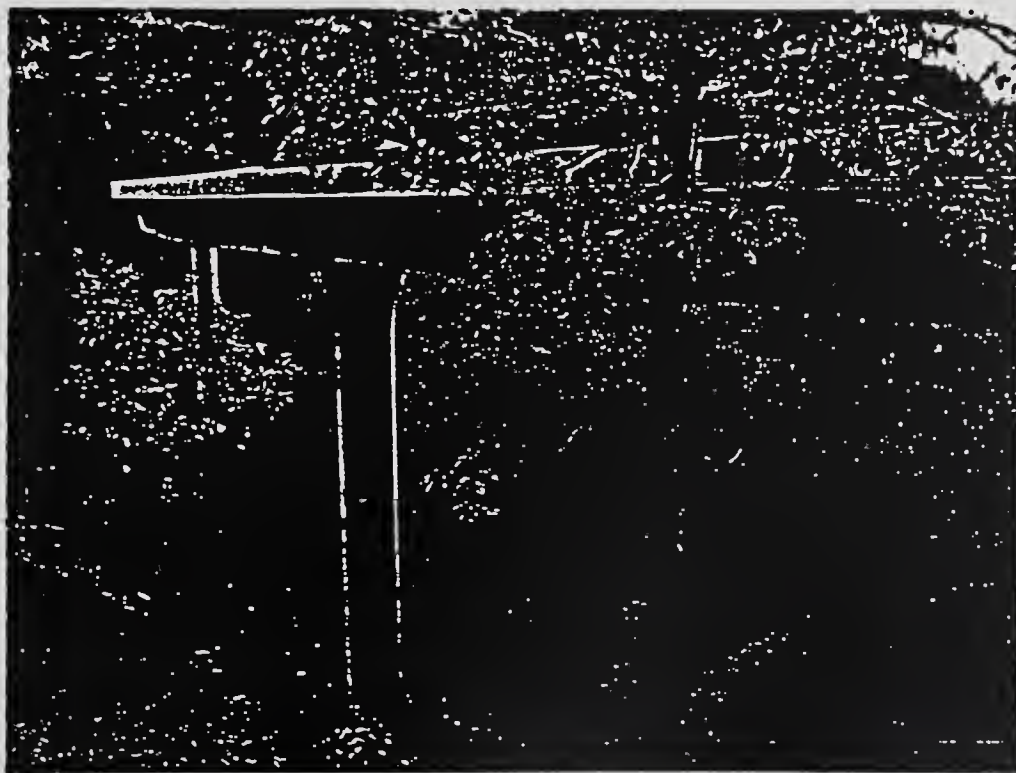
Source: A Proposed Program for Scenic Roads & Parkways, U.S. Department of Commerce for the President's Council on Recreation and Natural Beauty.

Figure 2: Elements of Scenic Roads and Scenic Corridors

*Roadside Development and Structures:* can have dramatic impacts on the road's scenic quality. The National Park Service has some historic roads which exemplify excellent use of materials and design for roadside development, see Figure 3. Items to consider include: signs, guard rails, rest areas, bridges, tunnels, walls, bicycle paths, and landscaping.

*Figure 3: National Park Service Historic Road Detail - Sequoia National Park  
Source: Road Character Guidelines Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Park*

The following Figure 4 illustrates a modern design solution to a scenic route.



*Figure 4: Modern Design Solution to a Scenic Route  
Source: Scenic Byways*

## ROAD ENGINEERING

Many of the same elements are addressed as in road design, however emphasis is placed on safety, operations, and maintenance effects.

*Safety issues* include: speed, signs, clear zone, barriers, pedestrians, emergency vehicles, grades, curves, vehicle restrictions, structures, railroad crossings and liability.

*Operational issues* include: delay and congestion, parking, traffic control devices, enforcement and signs.

*Maintenance Impacts* include: potential road deterioration and maintenance of signs, markings and rest areas. Maintenance of traffic control devices is important from a liability aspect.

### *Impact on Road Design Elements*

*Design Speed* is primarily based on the type of function the highway is expected to provide. Control of design speed is a key factor in increasing safety on the road.

#### *Vertical Alignment*

- *Curves:* Minimum stopping sight distances should be provided
- *Grades:* These depend on road type, design speed and terrain. For example, a back country route may have steep grades over difficult terrain, with a low design speed.

#### *Horizontal Alignment*

- *Minimum radius:* On most scenic roads the existing conditions would meet minimum radius requirements, based on AASHTO standards, except possibly back country routes
- *Super-elevation:* On all paved roads with design speeds greater than 20 m.p.h., super elevation rates should comply with AASHTO standards. However, speed limits can again compensate for inconsistencies.

Figure 5 illustrates a well aligned roadway.



Figure 5: Well aligned roadway in Montana

**Sight Distance:** Three types of sight distance requirements should be considered for highway safety. These are: stopping sight distance, passing sight distance, intersection sight distance.

**Number of Lanes:** For most low volume scenic roads, two lanes would be adequate. Single lane scenic roads would not pose significant problems provided adequate turn-outs and warnings are provided, with possibly restrictions on large vehicles.

**Structures:** In terms of safety, structures such as bridges, culverts, walls and tunnels should be in accordance with AASHTO standards. However, historic and aesthetic quality of structures should also be taken into consideration. The following minimum clearances used on park roads would be adequate for all scenic roads:

Minimum Vertical Clearance - 14 feet

Minimum Horizontal Clearance - 4 feet + roadway width

### **SCENIC ROAD CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS**

A pertinent reference is "Safety Impacts, Design Standards, and Classification Systems for Scenic Byways". This document proposes a scenic road classification system based on Design, Safety, and Operation Elements. The following is an edited extract of the proposed classification system. While functional classification for highways developed by the American Association for State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) is based on the degree of land access and mobility provided by the facility for all trip purposes, three primary needs have been identified for this classification system for scenic roads.

1. The proposed classification should provide sufficient information to the scenic and recreational traveler on:
  - The type of roadway and support facilities to be expected.
  - Level of safety provided by the scenic road.
2. It should reflect travel and roadway characteristics unique to each class as far as possible.
3. It should provide a sufficient framework within which minimum design standards can be specified for safety, operation and maintenance.

A system with five scenic route categories is suggested. Identified by letters A through E, this classification would give an indication of the type of service provided by the road for activities related to scenic and recreational travel. The five scenic road categories proposed would include the entire spectrum of roads that would be included in a scenic byways program.

**Category A:** Roads in this category would be urban and rural principal arterials, and would consist of all interstate, freeway and expressway type facilities with full control of access. These scenic roads would accommodate activities such as scenic drives, scenic overlooks etc., while maintaining the minimum design standards required on such highway facilities.

**Category B:** These scenic roads would consist of urban and rural principal arterials with partial control of access, parkways and principal park roads. They would typically be roads with two or more lanes and design speeds exceeding 45 miles per hour.

**Category C:** This category of scenic roads would include all urban and rural minor arterials and major collectors with no control of access. All urban and rural roads under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs would also be included in this category. Typically, Category C roads would consist of two-lane paved roads with design speeds of 40 miles per hour or greater. Most state primary routes would be classified in this category. Most of the scenic road mileage is likely to be on two-lane roads as the inventory conducted for the 1990 National Scenic Byways Study indicated that over 80 percent of all scenic roads are two-laned roads.

**Category D:** These scenic roads would include all state secondary routes, urban and rural local roads. Most scenic roads within the jurisdiction of Forest Service, BIA and BLM would also be included in this category. Typically, they would have two-lanes with design speeds of 50 miles per hour on level terrain and 30 miles per hour on mountain terrain. The pavement of Category D roads would be intermediate type bituminous or treated surfaces with little or no shoulder.

**Category E:** These scenic roads would include Primitive Park Roads in the National Park Service, Local Roads in the Forest Development Road System, Special Purpose Roads on the Indian Reservation Road System, and Local and Resource Roads on the Federal Lands Development Roads. It would also include state and local roads similar to those in Wisconsin's Rustic Roads Program. In general, all these roads would have the lowest design standards among all public roads. They would typically have one or two lanes of gravel or natural graded surface and no shoulders. The design speeds could be as low as 10 miles per hour. The visitors on these roads would be advised to expect a degree of difficulty with respect to driving on such roadways and the availability of amenities. Category E scenic roads would provide access, though difficult at places, to locations of most interesting and diverse outdoor experience. Activities such as cycling and hiking could also be expected on these roads.

Table 2 shows the different existing functional classifications and their relationship to this primary classification system.

*Table 2: Scenic Byway Classification Systems Based on Existing Functional Classifications*

Scenic Route Category	AASHTO	National Park Service	U.S. Forest Service	Bureau of Indian Affairs	Bureau of Land Management
A	Urban/Rural Principal Arterials with full control of access				
B	Urban/Rural Principal Arterials with partial control access	Urban/Rural Parkway Principal Park Road			
C	Urban/Rural Minor Arterials	Connector Park Road	Arterial Roads	Urban/Rural Roads	
D	Urban/Rural Collectors, Local Roads	City Street, Special Purpose Park Roads	Collector Roads	Rural Roads	Collector Roads
E		Primitive Park Roads	Local Roads	Special Purpose Roads	Local Roads Resource Roads

## ***ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES***

The following matrix and illustrations provide an overview of the range of road types and associated facilities available, as well as their relationships. Most of the illustrations are roads in Montana.

**Table 3: ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES**

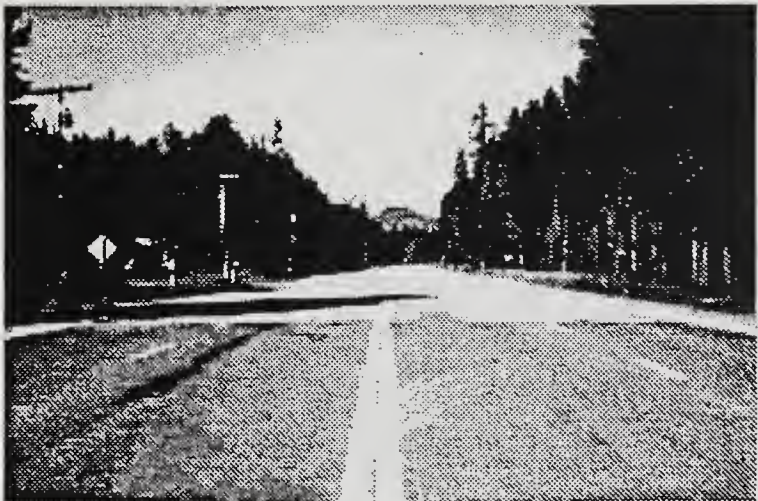
ROADWAY TYPE	BIKE PATH Adjacent or Separate	DESIGN FEATURES ACCESSORIES					ROAD EDGE/ LANDSCAPE						FACILITIES					SIGNS				
		CATTLE GUARDS	HISTORIC IMPROVEMENTS	BARRIERS/GUARDRAILS	BRIDGES	INTERMODEL CROSSING	NO SHOULDER WILD EDGE	NATURAL EDGE	AGRICULTURAL EDGE	URBAN DOWNTOWN EDGE	URBAN STRIP COMMERCIAL EDGE	HIGHLY LANDSCAPED EDGE	PULLOUTS GRAVEL	PULLOUTS BARRIER, ETC	INTERPRETIVE INFORMATION	REST STOP/TOILET, ETC	DEVELOPED FACILITIES E.G. FOOD	MARKERS LOCATIONAL/DIRECTIONAL	BYWAYS SIGNS	INFORMATION/INTERPRETATION SIGNS	SIGN KIOSK	SIGNS WITH/FOR DEVELOPMENT
TWO LANE GRAVEL IMPROVED OR UNIMPROVED		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓						✓					✓	✓	✓		
TWO LANE PAVED NARROW SHOULDERS		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓		
TWO LANE PAVED WIDE SHOULDERS	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓					✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	
FOUR LANE UNDIVIDED	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
FOUR LANE DEVELOPED/DIVIDED	✓				✓	✓				✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

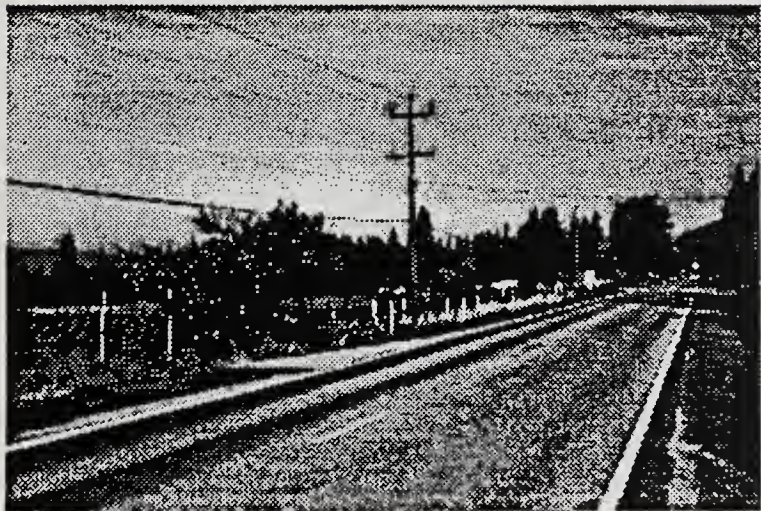
Roadway Type



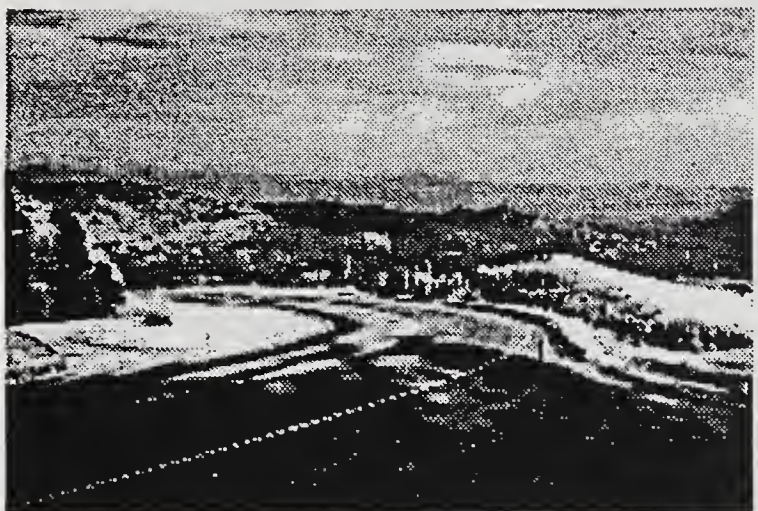
**Two Lane - Gravel Improved**  
(Rustic and Backways)



**Four Lane - Undivided**



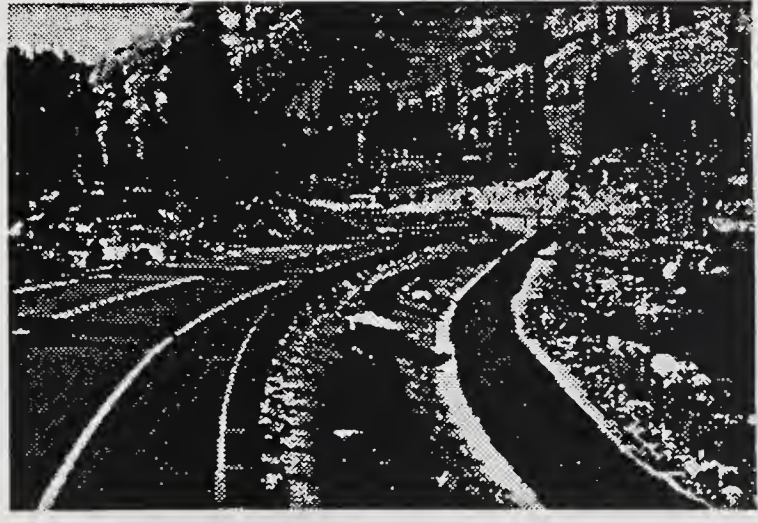
**Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders**



**Four Lane - Developed**



**Two Lane - Wide Shoulders**  
Bike path in shoulders



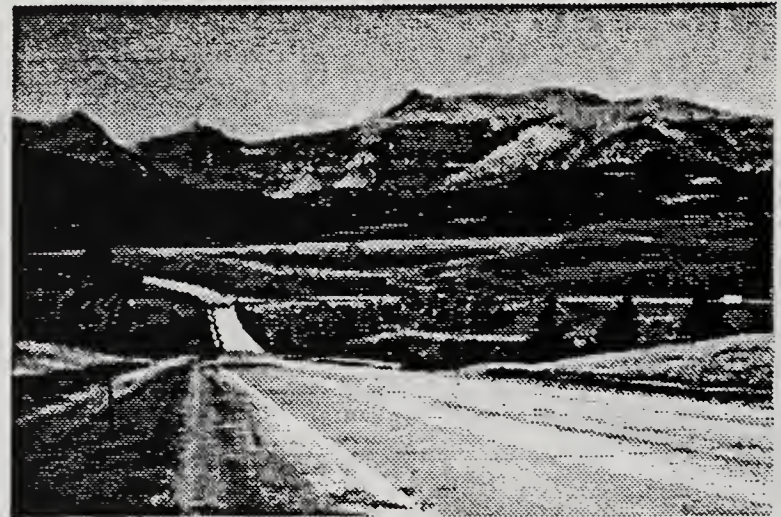
**Four Lane - Developed**  
Snowy Range Road, Wyoming - Separated Bike Path

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES  
*Road Design Features/Accessories*



**Two Lane - Gravel Improved**

*No improvements on cattle range - potentially dangerous*



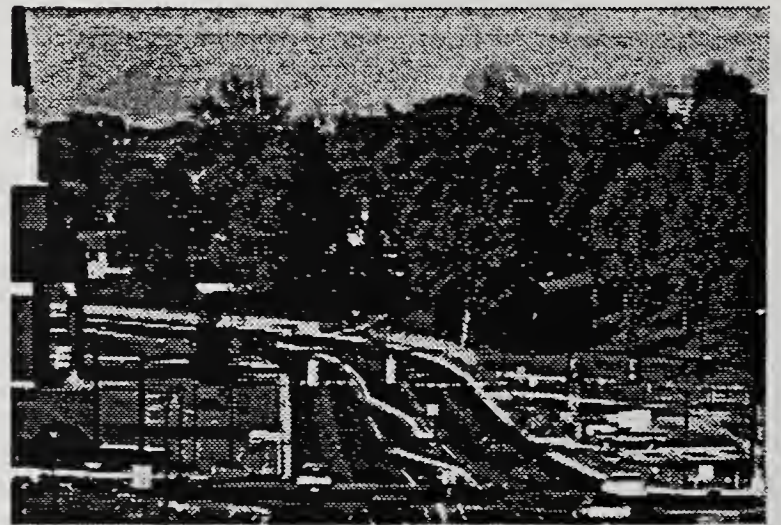
**Four Lane - Undivided**

*Well aligned bridge crossing*



**Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders**

*Historic Structures eg. Sequoia National Park*



**Four Lane - Developed**

*State Route 73, Maryville, Tennessee passes through the community*



**Two Lane - Wide Shoulders**

*Barrier Design - Special Consideration should be given eg. replace concrete barriers with see-through guardrails*

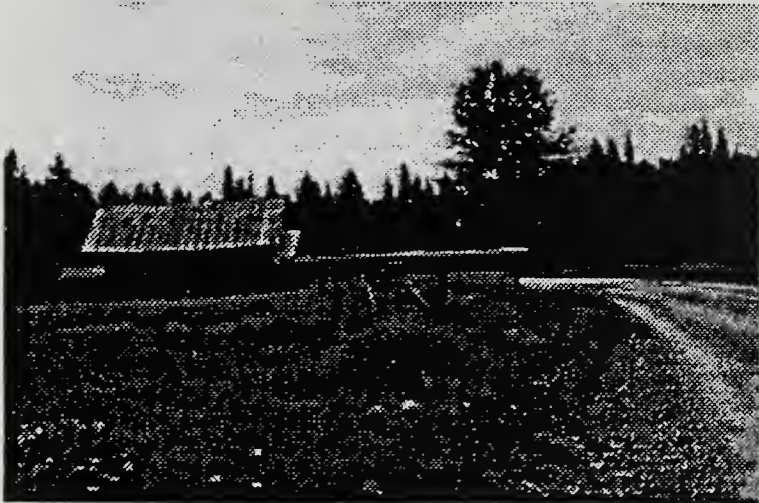


**Four Lane - Developed**

*Intermodal Crossing*

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

*Road Edge/Landscape Treatment*



***Two Lane - Gravel Improved***

*No shoulder - wild unmaintained edge  
appropriate in wilderness environment*



***Two Lane***

*Road through Urban Area - Building Edge*



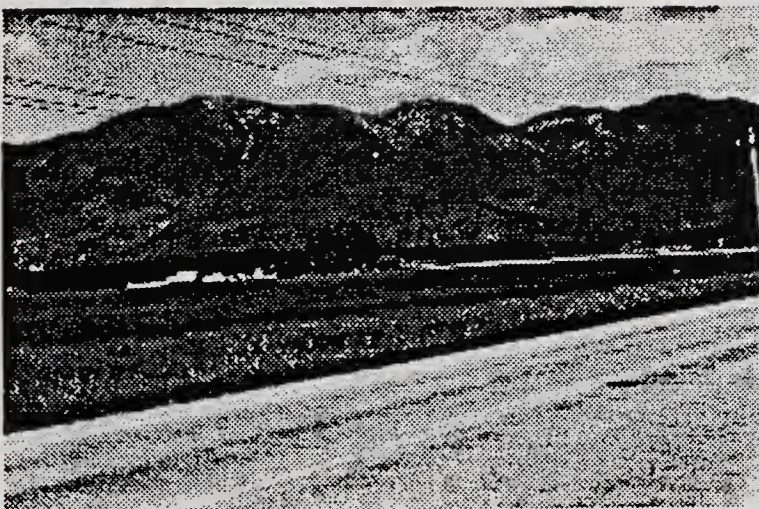
***Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders***

*Natural appearing edge*



***Four Lane - Developed***

*Road through Urban Area - signage edge could be improved  
Median provides landscaping opportunities*



***Two Lane - Wide Shoulders***

*Agricultural Edge*

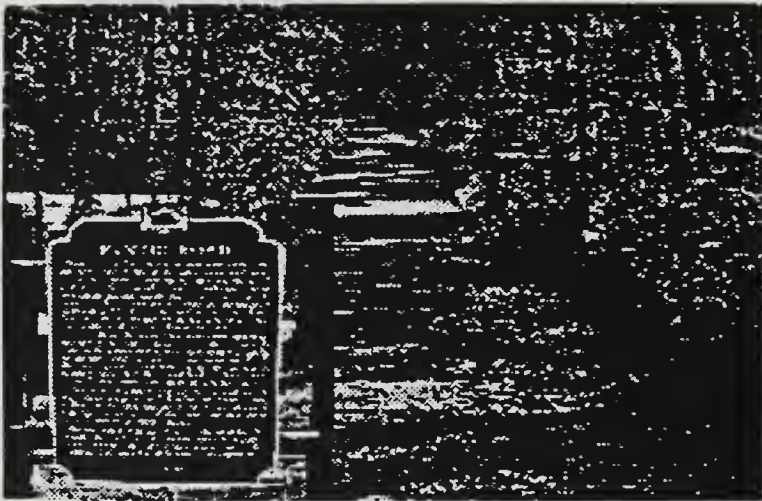


***Four Lane - Developed***

*Road edge landscaped to engineering standards*

ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

*Facilities*



***Two Lane - Gravel Improved***  
*Wisconsin Rustic Routes - Sign only*



***Four Lane - Undivided***  
*Interpretive Site*



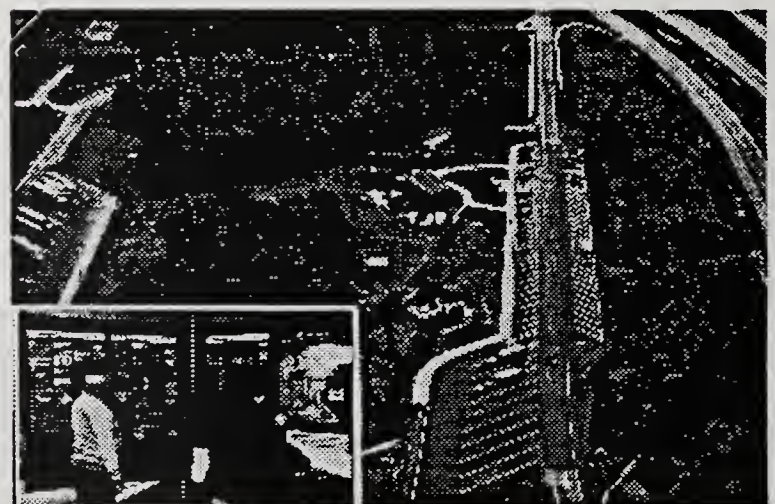
***Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders***  
*Undeveloped pull - out*



***Four Lane - Developed***  
*Developed commercial facilities*



***Two Lane - Wide Shoulders***  
*Developed pull - out*



***Four Lane - Developed***  
*Information kiosks in rest areas*

## ROAD TYPES AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES

### Signs



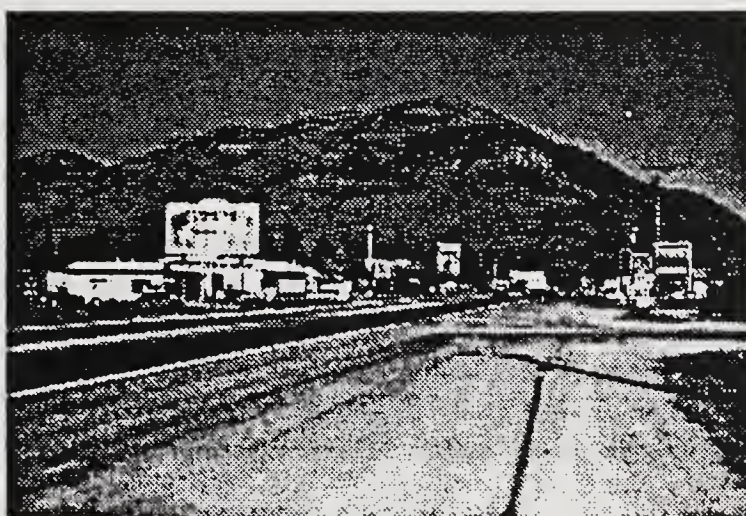
**Two Lane - Gravel Improved**  
Trail Marker



**Four Lane - Undivided**  
Kiosk in pull-out



**Two Lane - Narrow Shoulders**  
Forest Service Scenic Byways Sign



**Four Lane - Developed**  
Poor commercial signage



**Two Lane - Wide Shoulders**  
Roadside Sign

**Four Lane - Developed**  
Integrated commercial signage

## **ANTICIPATED IMPACTS ON SCENIC ROUTE CATEGORIES**

The following discussion addresses the anticipated impacts on each category of scenic routes A to E. It takes a conservative approach to operational, maintenance, and safety issues. (Source: "Safety Impacts, Design Standards, and Classification Systems for Scenic Byways.")

### ***Category A Scenic Roads***

These roads would experience the least impact as a result of designation as a scenic road due to their ability to carry the additional traffic. This is chiefly due to their superior design standards. However, in order to maintain the safety and operational standards on these routes, it may be necessary to impose certain restrictions, such as no parking on shoulders except in case of an emergency. Such restrictions may be necessary to discourage recreational travelers using shoulders for temporary parking to view scenery, take photographs, etc. This may be accomplished through warning signs and enforcement. On the other hand, if complementary facilities such as scenic overlooks and rest areas are not available, enforcement of such restrictions may not be very successful. Therefore, it may be necessary to specify minimum levels of complementary facilities in the qualifying criteria or guidelines for selecting for scenic roads.

On Class A roads, the following types of scenic and recreational travel activities are likely to take place:

1. A leisurely drive in order to enjoy the scenic sights;
2. Pull over at scenic overlooks; and,
3. Exit and entry to safety rest areas and information centers.

Provided that the highway and support facilities have been designed to meet required standards, these activities should not result in any major impact on the normal operation of these routes.

The first type of activity would result in tourist traffic driving at a slower speed than all other traffic, resulting in speed differentials in the traffic stream. Large differences in speed can lead to unsafe operating conditions. Therefore, measures that could be taken to minimize the resulting impacts would be purely of an operational nature. With adequate signs and warning messages to travelers on these roads, it may be possible to create an awareness of the presence of slower drivers. Other considerations that would determine the level of impact and requirement of mitigating measures are:

- Routes in mountainous terrain that may require climbing lanes;
- Truck traffic; and,
- Traffic volumes, average speeds, through traffic, peak periods.

The second type of activity would result in vehicles leaving and entering the highway at scenic overlooks. The design of overlooks with adequate sight distance, deceleration/acceleration lanes, parking and signing would minimize the impacts.

The third type of travel activity would result in visitors stopping at supporting facilities. In the absence of existing facilities which may be upgraded to handle increased visitors, new facilities may need to be provided according to the AASHTO Guide on Safety Rest Areas. Such requirements should be determined on the basis of the number of visitors expected and the level of service provided by the existing facilities.

### ***Category B Scenic Roads***

The type of tourist travel activities anticipated on these routes will include some access to recreational areas such as picnic areas, camping and boat launching sites. The amount of interaction between tourist traffic and other traffic is likely to be greater on these routes than on Category A routes but not to an extent to have any significant impacts.

In the absence of adequate shoulder width, as the case may be on certain Park Roads, restrictions on shoulder use may need to be imposed for safety reasons. The issue of providing guard rails at locations considered a potential safety hazard needs to be addressed. Better criteria to determine such needs could be established. On all roads that carry a large number of through traffic in comparison to scenic traffic, sufficient safe passing opportunities should be provided.

The operation on grades would be affected by slower vehicles on two-lane Park Roads where climbing lanes are not usually provided. On other arterials carrying truck traffic, such effects are likely to have been addressed already. In general, the safety and operation of these roads are not likely to be impacted to any significant level due to scenic designation.

### ***Category C Scenic Roads***

These roads would need additional resources for maintenance as a result of faster deterioration of roadway and shoulders due to increased traffic volumes and wider recreational vehicles. The additional signs and supporting facilities provided would also require more maintenance effort.

These roads are likely to be affected by nearly all types of travel activities resulting from scenic designation. For this reason, these roads are also likely to experience considerable impact. The type of travel activities would range from non-stop through traffic attracted from nearby roads that run parallel to the scenic road, to recreational activities such as hiking and biking.

Since most scenic roads are likely to be in this category, it is reasonable to expect most of the increased travel resulting from scenic designation to take place on these routes. Safety impacts on these roads are likely to result due to:

- The influx of slower and larger vehicles such as recreational vehicles and tour buses;
- Interaction between through and local traffic;
- Increased turning movements;
- Increased pedestrian activity and hiking; and,
- Increased bicycle use.

Roads that carry a significant percentage of large trucks and have no practical bypass route are likely to experience significant safety and operational impacts due to designation. Some programs, such as the Virginia Byway Program, attempt to locate scenic roads bypassing major roads so that they provide opportunity to leave high speed roads for leisurely motoring. Such scenic roads are also less likely to experience the impacts mentioned earlier.

The likely results of scenic and recreational travel on the operation of these roads are:

- Traffic congestion;
- Parking inadequacies;
- Needs for additional traffic control devices such as signals, signs and pavement markings;
- Need for traffic management plans;
- Intersection and parking requirements for tour buses, recreation vehicles; and,
- Needs for additional directional and informational signs.

### ***Category D Scenic Roads***

These roads are likely to experience the highest increase in maintenance costs. The type of pavements on these facilities, usually adequate for low truck and traffic volumes may need shorter maintenance cycles. A likely impact would be more shoulder damage and pavement edge raveling due to wider vehicles. The additional traffic signals, signs and markings required for efficient and safe traffic management would also require more maintenance effort. The additional supporting facilities would also require additional resources for maintenance.

The type of travel activities likely to occur on these roads would depend on the location and type of road. On Urban and Rural Local Roads, the travel activities would consist of:

- Access to locations of scenic and recreational interest.
- Visits to urban scenic locations.

On all other roads in this category, the entire spectrum of scenic and recreational activities are likely to take place. However, some of these roads which may already have restrictions on large vehicles, such as trucks, for safety reasons may need to be evaluated prior to designation.

The impact on safety due to scenic designation is likely to be relatively high on these roads. The reasons for this are:

- Existing safety features being substandard in comparison to AASHTO requirements;
- The unforgiving nature of the roadside;
- The intended function of these roads;
- Changes in the typical traveler and vehicle; and,
- A significant number of anticipated users.

As a result, careful screening of candidate road segments and some safety improvements would be necessary. The concerns regarding inadequate clear zones and guard rail provisions need to be addressed. In many instances upgrading of these roads to provide a high level of safety may be impractical. Therefore, either the candidate road should be upgraded to some acceptable level of safety, or if such action is cost prohibitive, or not feasible for environmental reasons, the route should be disqualified for scenic program consideration. An acceptable level of safety on these roads needs to be analyzed and agreed upon by the operating agency.

The operational impact of designating these roads as scenic would be felt most on the local roads. All other roads in this category operate at low speeds, carry low volumes and would not be affected by the increased scenic and recreational travel.

The maintenance of these roads at levels sufficient for their current functional role may not be adequate after designation due to increase in traffic volumes and larger vehicles. The exact nature of the impact of designation on maintenance would be location specific. Urban and rural local roads would require additional maintenance related to signs and other traffic control devices. Forest Service, BLM and BIA roads would require increased maintenance of the pavement, shoulders, signs and supporting facilities.

### ***Category E Scenic Roads***

With regard to safety, these routes would have the most unforgiving roadside features. The width, surface type, horizontal and vertical alignment and level of signing on these routes would only accommodate slower driving. Therefore, it would be essential to develop an expectation in the motorist of the unforgiving nature of these roads. A motorist made aware of these conditions would drive cautiously, slower and would not expect to be given all the warnings one would expect on better roads. The driver expectation needs to be created from the beginning at trip planning stage through brochures or short descriptive legends on scenic road maps describing the typical road characteristics. This would help prevent unprepared visitors from embarking on trips on these roads. This also needs to be followed up through information and signs at key entrances, where the largest volumes are expected. Some signing along the road would be necessary to provide some warning of hazardous conditions. Typical examples for these are signs such as:

Sharp Curves Next 10 Miles  
or  
Steep Slopes No Guard Rail

The scenic byway programs of the Forest Service and BLM include some single-lane roads which may be included in a proposed program. The adequacy of sight distance, turnouts and signing may need to be reviewed on these roads.

The operational impacts of designating these roads as scenic would primarily be those due to delay and hazards resulting from introducing unfamiliar drivers into difficult road conditions. The other vehicular operations on these roads, such as those during timber sales and heavy logging operations, may be affected by recreational travelers unfamiliar with the surroundings. Where such operations are anticipated, it may be necessary to impose seasonal or other restrictions on recreational visitors. Due to the presence of steep grades, restrictions such as limiting the use of certain routes only to four-wheel drive vehicles may also be required.

The maintenance impacts on these roads would be largely related to the additional signs that may be required. No significant impacts on other roadside features are expected if traffic volumes are not significantly increased.

### ***MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR DESIGN ELEMENTS AND AUXILIARY FEATURES***

#### ***Design Features***

For the purpose of scenic designation the following design elements are considered most important from a safety and operational standpoint:

- Design speed;
- Maximum grade;
- Number of lanes;
- Land width;
- Pavement surface type;
- Shoulder width; and,
- Safety barriers.

For all above elements, except safety barriers, suggested minimum standards are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Suggested Design Guides and Standards for Scenic Roads

Scenic Route Category	Terrain	Design Speed (mph)	Maximum Grade %	Number of Lanes	Minimum Lane Width (feet)	Pavement Surface Type	Minimum Shoulder Width (feet)
A	Level	70	3	$\geq 4$	12	H	10
	Rolling	60	4	$\geq 4$	12	H	10
	Mountain	50	7	$\geq 4$	12	H	10
B	Level	70	3	2-4	12	H	8
	Rolling	60	4	2-4	12	H	8
	Mountain	50	7	2-4	12	H	8
C	Level	60	8	2	8	H	8
	Rolling	50	8-12	2	8	H	6
	Mountain	40	12	2	8	H	6
D	Level	50	7	2	8	I	2
	Rolling	40	11	2	8	I	2
	Mountain	30	16	2	8	I	2
E	Level	15	10	1-2	14*	I,L	0
	Rolling	15	10-16	1-2	14*	I,L	0
	Mountain	10	16	1-2	14*	I,L	0

\* - Minimum Travelway Width

#### Pavement Surface Type

H - High (Concrete, Bituminous)

I - Intermediate (Surface Treatments, Bituminous)

L - Low (Earth Roads of Stabilized or Loose Material)

**Auxiliary Features**

A uniform system of directional and informational signs, and route markers for scenic roads needs to be developed. Such a system would provide consistent guidance to the traveler on routes which pass through multiple jurisdictions.

Support facilities such as rest areas and information centers would be required at different levels on all scenic routes. For example, on popular scenic routes where a high number of visitors are anticipated, the highest level of such facilities should be provided. On Category E routes, only roadside information and interpretive signs may be necessary. On routes that currently serve as scenic routes, the adequacy of available facilities should be evaluated. For this purpose, some criteria need to be established for the provision of these facilities. Such criteria may be based on the number of visitors, the scenic, cultural and historic features, and some minimum spacing to determine the number of facilities required.

**HIGHWAY COSTS FOR SCENIC BYWAYS**

This study was developed as part of the National Scenic Byways Study, "Safety, Traffic and Cost Considerations on Scenic Byways. The objective of this case study was to develop and document existing Scenic Byway cost data information that could be used as a quick reference guide in analyzing the feasibility of designating a highway as a Scenic Byway.

At the beginning of the study an attempt was made to estimate a cost per mile of designating a Scenic Byway. Upon review of the data, it was found to be impossible to develop a meaningful, generalized cost per mile. Improvement type differences appeared to account for substantial variation in the data. Therefore, it was decided to breakdown costs by improvement type, and features within each improvement type, and to show them in matrix form. See Table 5.

Types of Improvement identified were as follows:

Scenic Overlooks	Camera Spots
Campsites	Roadside Rest Area
Boat Launching Areas	Historic & Cultural Sites
Hiking Trails	Bicycle Trails
Information Centers	Visitor Centers
Picnic Sites	Existing Road Improvement Add 12' Lane

Improvements were further broken down into individual components or features as follows:

Operational Costs	Parking Per Space
Landscaping	Buildings
Rest Rooms	Climbing Lanes
Picnic Tables	Barbecues
Trails	Roads-Site Specific
Right-of-way	Maintenance
Trash Pickup	Signing

The features, commonly associated with each improvement are represented by an 'X' in the matrix. Costs are categorized by low, medium, and high.

**Application of Findings**

An example of how to use the table is shown on the matrix. It estimates the "medium cost" for a Camera Stop.

*Table 5: Matrix of Cost for Improvements to a Scenic Byway*

**A WORD OF CAUTION** - There remains substantial variation in each of the cost figures provided. Furthermore, these costs are representative of the period 1987 - 1989. Their use should be restricted to estimating likely program costs or in making a first attempt at a project cost. For engineering, more refined cost estimation is required.

In order to update the cost to 1994/95 standards, it is recommended that they be inflated by 20%.

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## APPENDIX E

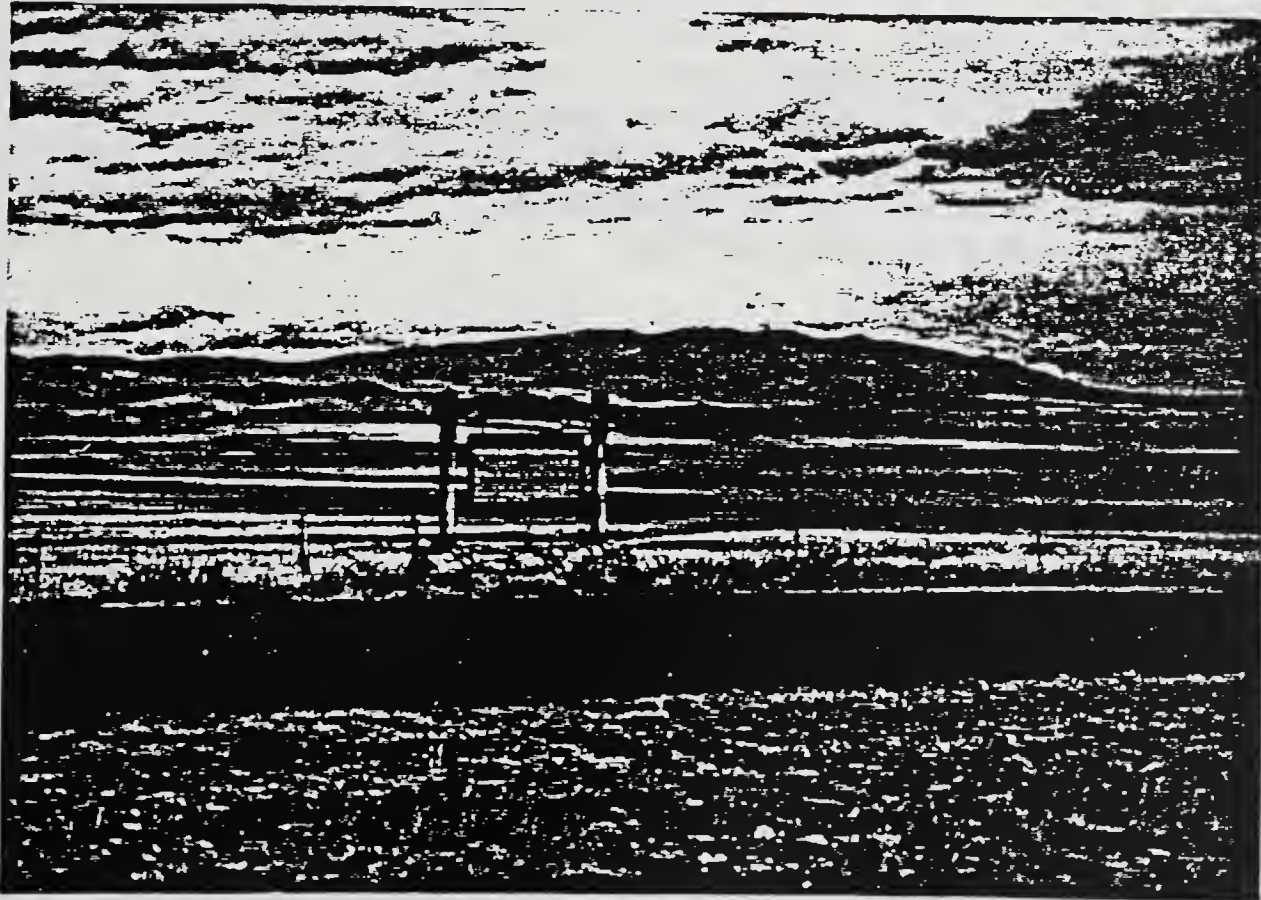
### Sign Options



MONTANA DEPARTMENT  
OF TRANSPORTATION

SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM

*Task 3: Accommodating Increased Tourism  
Signs*



*Prepared by: Design Workshop*

## INTRODUCTION

Most scenic byway programs have a logo or identification sign which marks the roadways designated as scenic byways. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service among other federal agencies, have developed signage systems using individual logos and federal sign standards.

Also, there are existing informational and directional signs throughout the State of Montana that could be incorporated into a scenic byway system.

A compendium of sign types and examples is included in the following categories:

1. Scenic Byway Logos
2. Agency Logos
3. Washington's Interpretive Marker Program
4. Character Signs
5. State of Montana Signs
6. Standard Federal Signs

Generally, signs should be in brown, blue, green or natural wood color backgrounds, with white symbols or lettering.

The following is a summary of the National Park Service's recommendations for signage.

Source: National Park Service Sign Manual, January 1988.

### *Planning Consideration for Signs*

- In determining the need for a sign or marker, the following questions should be answered:
  - What should the visitor know?
  - Is guidance or a message needed? If so, where and what?
  - How shall the message be presented?
  - Is the sign for drivers, cyclists or pedestrians?
  - At what speed is the person traveling?
- To be effective the sign should:
  - Fulfill a need
  - Command the attention and respect of the user
  - Convey a clear, simple message
  - Give adequate time for a proper response
- To fulfill these requirements, the following six basic considerations should be made:
  - Uniformity of signs
  - Design features including size, contrast, color, shape, composition, lighting and lettering
  - Placement in relation to sight distances
  - Maintenance should be of a high standard
  - Consider background materials when placing sign
  - Appropriate sign backing treatment
- Design and placement of signs should be compatible with vehicle speed, traffic pattern and the driver's visual perception responses

### ***Types of Signs***

- Standard traffic control signs
- Directional/informational guide signs
- Entrance signs
- Bicycle trail signs
- Pedestrian signs (urban or motor vehicle related)
- Interpretive signs/wayside exhibits
- Trail markers/back-country signs
- Symbol signs (internationally recognized)

### ***Recreation Information Topics***

- Provide trails and user information on the following subjects through signs, brochures, maps and interpretive exhibits:
  - Private/public land areas and boundaries
  - Trail rating, distance, alignments, loops and support facilities
  - Trail user opportunities (motorized/non-motorized)
  - Cultural sites, local customs, and land use within the corridor
  - Natural and cultural features of interest
  - Trail user responsibilities, ethics and minimum impact camping guidelines including handling of dogs and encounters with grazing or trailing livestock
  - Off-highway vehicle designations on adjacent public lands

### ***Federal Recreation Symbols***

These are the principal sources for information on activity signs used within recreation areas, see Figures. All symbols are silver white on a brown background except the Handicapped symbol (RS-028) which is white on a blue background. they fall into the categories of general, accommodations or service, winter recreation, water recreation, and land recreation symbols. some may be used with a red slash. Federal Recreation Symbols come in four sizes. The 18" x 18" size is for use on roads with a design speed greater than 25 mph. The 12" x 12" size is recommended for lower speeds. The 8" x 8" size is for pedestrian use where the sign will be viewed from 75 to 100 feet, and the 6" x 6" size for viewing at a distance of under 75 feet.

## SIGNS

### Scenic Byways Logos

Numerous and varied logos have been adopted for use along scenic byway corridors. The following are some examples.



Examples of Scenic Road Information Signs



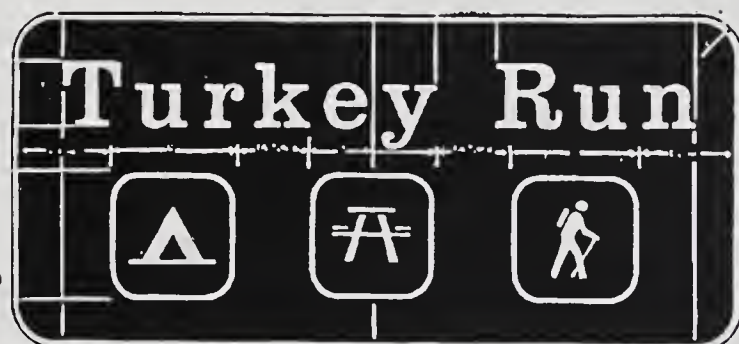
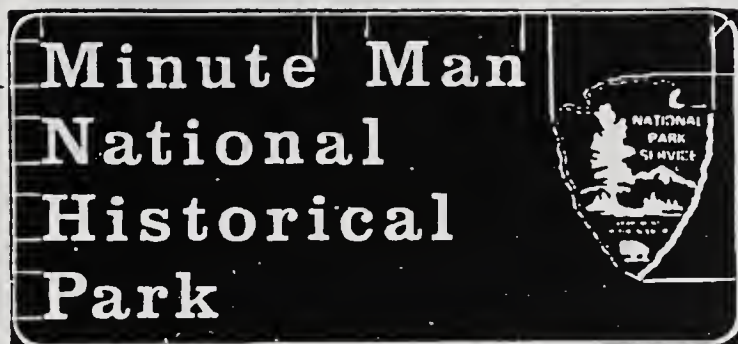
California State and County Scenic Highway Signs

## SIGNS

### Agency Logos



*Examples of Agency Logos*



*National Park Service Sign Details*



*Forest Service sign on site*

## SIGNS

### Washington State's Interpretive Marker Program

#### Highway Interpretive Markers

##### GUIDEPOSTS TO WASHINGTON'S HERITAGE



#### Highway Interpretive Markers

Highway Interpretive Markers help people learn about their heritage. They serve as roadside, open-air classrooms, with the advantage of being located where natural and human history was made. They transport people back across time, assisting the imagination and fostering understanding.

The Washington State Highway Commission, with the assistance of the Works Progress Administration, began placing Highway Interpretive Markers in the 1930s. Since that beginning, the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission have placed over sixty markers.

#### Interpretive Markers Council

The Interpretive Markers Council was formed in recent years, with representatives from the:

- ◆ Washington State Historical Society
- ◆ Washington State Department of Transportation, and
- ◆ Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Council guides maintenance of existing Highway Interpretive Markers and establishment of new ones. At present, the Council is placing new markers, thanks to funds from the state of Washington and a federal grant from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). In the future, placement of additional markers will depend upon the availability of funds.

#### Nomination of New Markers

Selection of new Highway Interpretive Markers is made by the Interpretive Markers Council, with the assistance of local communities and governments, historical agencies, and tribes.

Highway Interpretive Markers are placed at sites:

- ◆ of major significance to the history, culture, or character of Washington State,
- ◆ within or adjacent to a state highway right-of-way,
- ◆ at a safe and affordable location, and
- ◆ near the feature being marked.



For questions, comments, or to request a nomination form for a new marker, contact:

Interpretive Markers Coordinator (206/597-4226)  
Washington State Historical Society  
315 North Stadium Way  
Tacoma, WA 98403

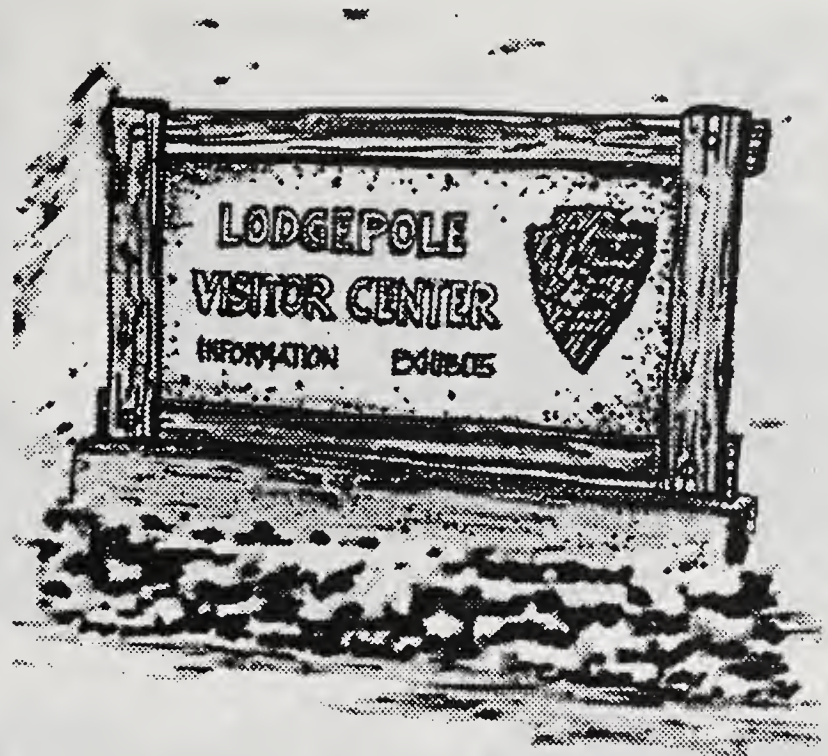
For further information, contact:

Scenic Highways Program Manager (206/705-7274)  
Washington State Department of Transportation  
PO Box 47329  
Olympia, WA 98504-7329

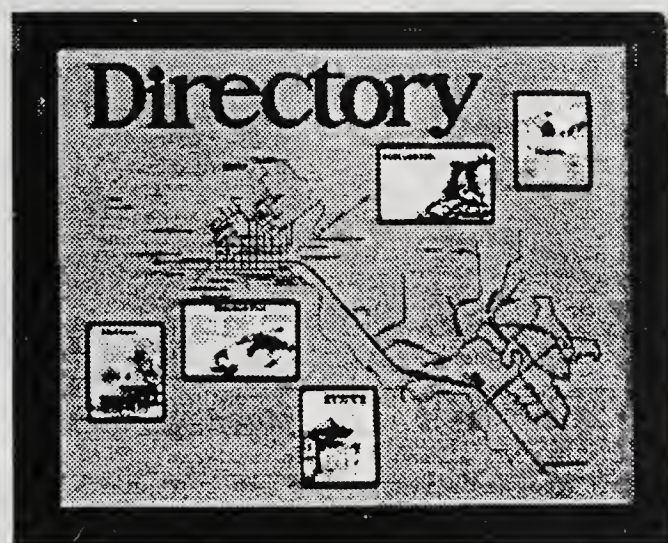
Chief, Interpretive Services (206/753-4204)  
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission  
7150 Cleanwater Lane  
PO Box 42664  
Olympia, WA 98504-2664

## SIGNS

### Character Signs



*Signs in National Parks*



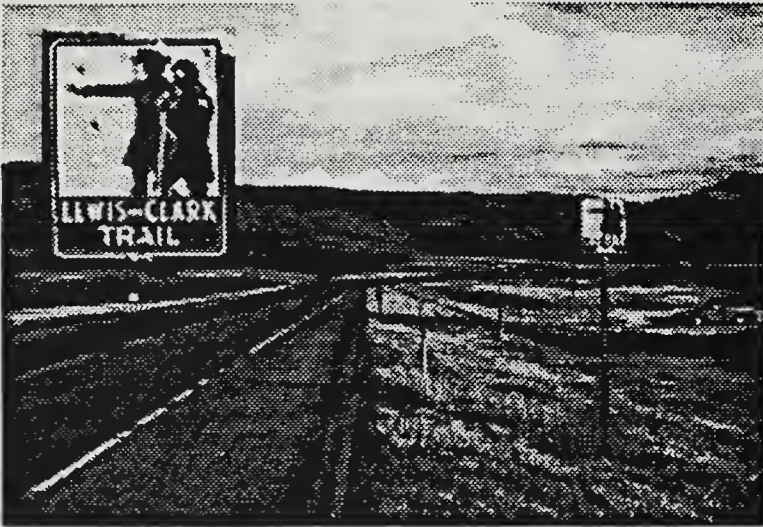
*Information/Orientation Sign*



*Wood Signs*

## SIGNS

### Examples of Montana Signs



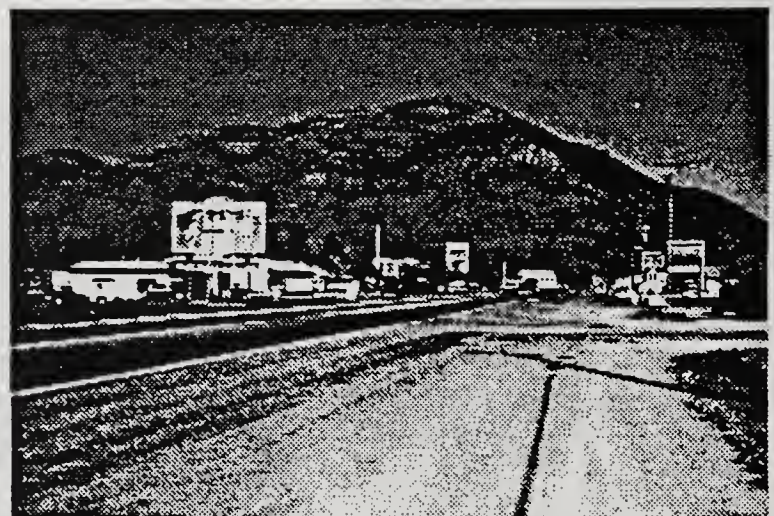
*Trail Marker*



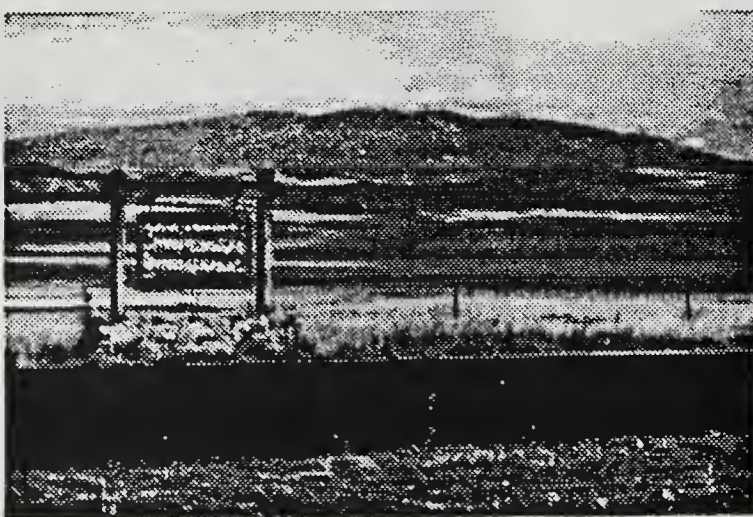
*Kiosk in pull-out*



*Forest Service Scenic Byways Sign*



*Poor commercial signage*



*Roadside Sign*

*Integrated commercial signage*

SIGNS  
Federal Recreation Symbols  
1 of 3

PERSONITE offers a variety of federal recreational symbols for indication of activities, services, areas of interest, etc. These decals and signs are designed for high-visibility and international recognition having white symbols on a brown background. All recreational symbols are available in 3" x 3" reflective decals. In addition, they are available in reflective, impact resistant signs in 8" x 8" and 12" x 12" sizes.

GENERAL SYMBOLS

SY	DECAL NO.	DESCRIPTION
02	RS-001	Firearms*
03	RS-002	Smoking*
04	RS-003	Automobiles*
05	RS-004	Trucks*
06	RS-005	Tunnel
07	RS-006	Lookout Tower
08	RS-007	Lighthouse
09	RS-008	Falling Rock
10	RS-009	Dam
11	RS-010	Fish Hatchery
12	RS-011	Deer Viewing Area
13	RS-012	Bear Viewing Area
14	RS-013	Drinking Water*
15	RS-014	Information
16	RS-015	Ranger Station
17	RS-016	Pedestrian Crossing*
18	RS-017	Pets On Leash*
19	RS-076	Environmental Study Area
20	RS-080	Point of Interest
21	RS-086	Litter
22	RS-208	Firewood Cutting

General Symbols



## SIGNS

### Federal Recreation Symbols 2 of 3

#### Accommodations/Services



221



229



236



243



251



222



230



237



244



252



223



231



238



245



253



224

#### Winter Recreation



239



246



254



225



232



240



247



255



226



233

#### Water Recreation



248



227



234



241



249

#### ACCOMMODATIONS/ SERVICES

KEY	DECAL NO.	DESCRIPTION
221	RS-036	Viewing Area
222	RS-037	Sleeping Shelter
223	RS-038	Campground*
224	RS-039	Picnic Shelter
225	RS-040	Trailer Sites*
226	RS-041	Trailer Sanitary Station
227	RS-042	Campfires*
228	RS-043	Trail Shelter
229	RS-044	Picnic Area*
230	RS-045	Kennel
231	RS-085	Laundry

#### WINTER RECREATION

KEY	DECAL NO.	DESCRIPTION
232	RS-077	Winter Recreation Area
233	RS-046	Cross-Country Skiing
234	RS-047	Downhill Skiing*
235	RS-048	Ski Jumping
236	RS-049	Sledding*
237	RS-050	Ice Skating*
238	RS-051	Ski Bobbing*
239	RS-052	Snowmobiling
240	RS-053	Snowshoeing*

#### WATER RECREATION

KEY	DECAL NO.	DESCRIPTION
241	RS-053	Marina
242	RS-054	Launching Ramp*
243	RS-055	Motorboating*
244	RS-056	Sailboating*
245	RS-057	Rowboating*
246	RS-058	Water Skiing*
247	RS-059	Surfing*
248	RS-060	Scuba Diving*
249	RS-061	Swimming*
250	RS-062	Diving*
251	RS-063	Fishing*
252	RS-079	Canoeing*
253	RS-087	Boat Tours
254	RS-088	Wading*
255	RS-107	Whitewater Rafting



\*This symbol also  
available with a red slash  
indicating this activity  
is prohibited.

SIGNS  
Federal Recreation Symbols  
3 of 3

RECREATION

DECAL NO.	DESCRIPTION
RS-064	Horse Trail*
RS-105	Jogging*
RS-065	Trail Bike Trail*
RS-066	Bicycle Trail*
RS-067	Recreational Vehicle Trail*
RS-108	ATV*
RS-068	Hiking Trail*
RS-069	Playground
RS-070	Amphitheater
RS-071	Tramway
RS-072	Hunting*
RS-073	Stable
RS-074	Interpretive Trail
RS-075	Interpretive Auto Trail
RS-081	Technical Rock Climbing*
RS-082	Climbing
RS-083	Rock Collecting*
RS-084	Spelunking*
RS-100	Directional Arrows
RS-101	Left Arrow
RS-102	Right Arrow
RS-103	Ahead Arrow
RS-200	Only
RS-106	3-Wheeler

Land Recreation





## **APPENDIX F**

### **Draft Application Narrative for Designation Criteria**



## **Draft Application Narrative for Designation Criteria**

The recommended Montana scenic byways system is a statewide, tiered system including potential for both byways and backways. There is no limitation on the number of byways/backways nor the number of designated miles. However, strict adherence to criteria guidelines and close scrutiny of applications is required to ensure a quality rather than quantity oriented program. Designation is accomplished through a nomination/application process based on criteria which has been weighed according to the importance given it by the statewide Scenic Byways Advisory Committee. In the case of large numbers of equally competitive applications, applications will be screened by a geographically balanced statewide selection committee formed through a nomination process by the Advisory Committee and others.

If an applicant seeks ultimate byways designation at the national level, a greater number of absolute criteria must be met as identified below. If an applicant only seeks designation under the State Program, fewer absolute criteria are required, but the option exists for consideration under the National Program if it also happens to meet those criteria as well.

### **Absolute Requirements for National Scenic Byways Nomination**

If the proponent sought designation under the National Scenic Byways Program the following criteria would be required:

- 1) Route must meet criteria for user safety, user facilities, and local and State plans to maintain the intrinsic values of the corridor through which it passes.
- 2) Route must safely and conveniently accommodate two-wheel-drive automobiles with standard clearances.
- 3) Route must safely and conveniently accommodate, where feasible, bicycle and pedestrian travel.
- 4) Route should not have too many gaps, but should be as continuous as possible.
- 5) Corridor management plan must show strong evidence of local support, and continuing advocacy and commitment to the designation of a highway as a scenic byway.
- 6) Route must demonstrate a practical balance between private property rights and the public interest through such tools as land use zoning, conveyance of easements, and economic incentives.
- 7) A corridor management plan must accompany each nomination. Plan must demonstrate how the byway will be operated and managed, how corridor preservation and enhancement will be implemented, and include a map and inventory of existing and planned development.
- 8) Corridor management plan must demonstrate that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible, and include a plan for making improvements to enhance that experience.
- 9) Corridor management plan must provide an indication that the levels of corridor protection will be highest through areas of greatest intrinsic value.
- 10) Corridor management plan must contain a viable marketing plan describing various measures that would be taken to attract travelers.

### **Absolute Requirements for State Scenic Byways Nomination**

If the proponent sought designation under the State Scenic Byways Program only, the following criteria would be required:

- 1) Each route nominated must possess one of the following thematic outstanding qualities: 1) scenic/visual; 2) scientific/educational; 3) historic/cultural; 4) natural features; or 5) recreational opportunities.
- 2) Only existing roads that can safely accommodate expected traffic volumes will be considered for either a scenic byway or backway. Nominated byways (only) must be paved with an identifiable shoulder.
- 3) All nominated routes must have strong local support and commitment to a scenic byways and backways designation, continuing advocacy and a commitment by the majority of agencies and landowners with jurisdiction along the proposed route.
- 4) A corridor management plan consistent with Federal, State, Tribal, local and other land use/management plans must accompany each nomination.

#### Other Criteria to be Considered for Route Nominations

Whether applying for state designation or ultimate designation under the National Program, the applicant should consider incorporation of other criteria in the proposal to further justify the route's eligibility. The following elements or criteria would also be considered in the application review.

#### **Intrinsic Value**

Relative to intrinsic value, greatest consideration will be given to proposed byways and backways with 1) cultural and historic landmarks, 2) unusual geological formations, and 3) outstanding mountains, foothills, and desert scenes. Lesser consideration will be given to proposed byways and backways with primary intrinsic values containing 1) streams, lakes, wetlands, 2) prairie, cactus, and wildflower areas, and 3) exceptional pastoral views.

#### **Safety and Road Type Conditions**

Although not considered requirements, preference for byways will be given to paved routes that meet AASHTO standards, are service level C or above, and accommodate two-wheel drive, including all RV units. Preference for backways will be given if the route is classified as improved gravel.

#### **Roadway Character**

##### **(Byways)**

Although not required, preference will be given to nominated byways that include a minimum length requirement, have identifiable beginning and end points, are visually and physically accessible for elderly and handicapped, and are as continuous as possible without gaps. Additional considerations include existing signing that does not detract from the byway, linkage between existing and proposed points of interest, alternative usage possibilities, routes that are destinations in themselves, and available complementary facilities.

##### **(Backways)**

The two most important considerations for backways are routes with a minimum length requirement and identifiable beginning and end points, followed by nondetracting existing signage, signage that consolidates with byways signing, and routes that are as continuous as possible without gaps. Lesser considerations include routes that are connecting links between existing and proposed points of interest and routes that are destinations in themselves.

#### **Compatibility**

Designation consideration will include a balance between private property rights and the public interest through such tools as a county corridor plan. Existing land use adjacent to the route should be compatible with scenic byways objectives (including outdoor advertising). Corridor management plans must be consistent with federal, state, and local land use/management plans.

## **Management/Protection**

Consideration of the levels of corridor protection will be highest through areas of greatest intrinsic value. Such areas must be indicated in the corridor management plan. A corridor management plan must demonstrate that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible and include a plan for making improvements to attract travelers. It must contain a viable marketing strategy describing various measures planned to attract travelers.

### **Specific Criteria Considerations**

Each application for route designation would be evaluated based on how well it meets the absolute requirements and additional element identified above and summarized below. The following list summarizes the additional criteria described above. They are not requirements, rather, they are considerations, listed in order of priority, as determined by the Scenic Byways Advisory Committee.

#### **Intrinsic Values**

- o Cultural and historic landmarks
- o Unusual geological formations
- o Outstanding mountains, foothills, & desert scenes
- o Streams, lakes, wetlands
- o Prairie, cactus, & wildflower areas
- o Exceptional pastoral views

#### **Safety and Road Type Conditions**

##### **Byways**

- o Route accommodates two-wheel drive, including all RV units.
- o Route meets all AASHTO standards.
- o Route is service level C or above.
- o Route is open year round.

##### **Backways**

- o Route is classified as improved gravel.
- o Route is open year round.
- o Route requires 4-wheel or high clearance vehicle.

#### **Roadway Character**

##### **Byways**

- o Route has minimum length requirement.
- o Route has identifiable beginning and end points.
- o Route is visually and physically accessible for elderly and handicapped.
- o Route is as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
- o Existing signing does not detract.
- o Route is connecting link between existing and proposed points of interest.
- o Route accommodates alternative usage.
- o Route is destination in itself.
- o Route includes complementary facilities.

##### **Backways**

- o Route has minimum length requirement.
- o Route has identifiable beginning and end points.
- o Existing signing does not detract.
- o Signing of existing route consolidates w/byways signing.
- o Route is as continuous as possible without too many gaps.
- o Route is connecting link between existing and proposed points of interest.
- o Route is a destination in itself.

- o Route accommodates alternative usage.
- o Route includes complementary facilities.

## **Local Commitment of Resources**

(all absolute criteria)

### **Compatibility**

- o There is a balance between private property rights and the public interest.
- o Existing land use adjacent to the route should be compatible with scenic byway objectives.

### **Management/Protection**

- o A corridor management plan must accompany each nomination.
- o Levels of corridor protection will highest through areas of highest intrinsic value.
- o Corridor management plan demonstrates that intrusions on the visitor experience have been minimized to the extent feasible and include a plan for making improvements to attract travelers.
- o Corridor management plan contains a viable marketing strategy describing various measures planned to attract travelers.

### **Other**

- o No major improvements scheduled that would change character.
- o Project is in harmony w/other highway projects.
- o Sufficient land area for facilities.
- o Public demand.
- o Availability and compatibility of existing facilities.
- o Location and distribution across the state.
- o Enhances tourist distribution.
- o Service to major population centers.
- o Loop capabilities.

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Meeting Notes-Third Advisory Committee Meeting**



## SCENIC BYWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meetings Minutes/Synopsis

May 26, 1994

The Advisory Committee for the Montana Department of Transportation Scenic Byways Feasibility Study Project met at 10AM in a meeting room at the Park Plaza Hotel in Helena on May 26, 1994. Those present were:

### Advisory Committee Members or Representatives

Clint Blackwood, Travel Montana  
Senator Don Bianchi, MT Legislature  
Gary Gilmore, MT Department of Transportation  
John Kwiatkowski, Bureau of Land Management  
John Bloomquist, MT Stockgrowers Association  
Aidan Myhre, Outdoor Advertising  
Marcella Sherfy, MT Historical Preservation Office  
Kim Schulke, MT Motor Carriers  
Doug Smith, MT Association of Planners  
Peggy Trenk, Western Environmental Trade Association  
Wesley Main, Native American Tribes  
Mike McWright, National Parks  
Carl Foggin, Bureau of Indian Affairs  
Fred Bower, U.S. Forest Service  
Dave Miller, Federal Highways Administration  
Wesley Choc, Montana AAA

### Committee Members Not in Attendance and Unrepresented

Louise Bruce, MT Wilderness Association  
Bob Walker, MT Fish Wildlife & Parks  
Homer Staves, KOA Kampgrounds of America  
John Williams, Bicycle Federation of America  
Cheryl Beatty, MT Association of Counties  
Dottie Maitland, Tourism  
Cordell Ringell, BIA

### Resource People and Project Team Members

Bill Cloud, MT Department of Transportation  
Dick Turner, MT Department of Transportation  
John Craig, MT Department of Transportation  
Clint Erb, Morrison-Maierle Environmental Corp.  
Gloria Hermanson, Communications Strategies  
Linda Brander, Communications Strategies

### Guests

Sue Akey, Montana AAA  
Michael Wangen, Three County Network of Western Montana Citizen Groups  
Sara Busey, Three County Network of Western Montana Citizen Groups  
Daphne Jones, Three County Network of Western Montana Citizen Groups

## DISCUSSION ITEM 1

### Program Mission Statement

Discussion of the mission statement as proposed by the study team led the Committee to recommend the following mission statement wording:

**Recommendation:** Provide all Montanans and guests to the state a quality-oriented system of scenic byways and backways, and ensure the long-term benefits, enjoyment, enhancement, and

preservation of the intrinsic values which define their designation, while respecting the integrity of Montana's transportation system.

## **DISCUSSION ITEM 2**

### **Program Goals**

In the format presented, potential program goals were numbered. The Committee felt the final program format should utilize "bullets" rather than numbers to avoid any misunderstanding of priority. Committee members also felt the goal to "promote and enhance tourism in Montana" should be moved to a position other than first on the list in order to avoid misperception. Economic development issues were omitted from the goals section as the Committee agreed economic development is an indirect benefit of a scenic byways/backways program, not a goal that reflects the mission statement. It was indicated that "preferred outcomes" for the program were addressed in task report 2 and will be included in the final study report.

**Recommendation:** Program goals should read --

- \* Expand the travelling public's awareness of Montana's superb scenic, cultural, historic, recreational, and educational resources.
- \* Protect and enhance the scenic, cultural, historic, recreational, and educational assets within the byways and backways corridors.
- \* Provide alternative opportunities to experience Montana.
- \* Ensure compatibility with other important activities on Montana's transportation system.
- \* Promote and enhance tourism in Montana.

## **DISCUSSION ITEM 3**

### **Program Objectives**

The following program objectives were recommended by committee members:

**Recommendation:**

- \* Develop a quality-oriented scenic byways/backways program based on adherence to the mission, goals, and criteria set for designation eligibility.
- \* Encourage proactive, local involvement in the application, planning, management, and commitment to scenic byways. (The original suggested wording of this objective included "enforcement." The Advisory Committee questioned legal local authority for enforcement and consequently replaced "enforcement" with "commitment".)
- \* Require route specific corridor management plans. (To guide applicants through the process of corridor planning, a detailed manual will be developed. The manual will address the public involvement process, securing support from jurisdictional entities, marketing, goals and objectives, criteria, etc.)
- \* Develop an active promotion strategy and continue an active, statewide, public awareness campaign.

## **DISCUSSION ITEM 4**

### **Route Jurisdiction**

Route jurisdiction legally designates the entity responsible for the operations, maintenance, and

jurisdiction of the roadway itself. Certain routes may pass through lands owned by one stakeholder (e.g. reservation), but the maintenance, operation, and jurisdiction of that route may be the responsibility of a different entity (e.g. county). The Advisory Committee agreed that gaining preliminary approval of the jurisdictional entities must be the first step in the nomination process. The members felt the jurisdictional entities could give preliminary approval through a memorandum of understanding followed by formal approval once the corridor management plan is complete. It would be the responsibility of the nominating parties to keep these entities well informed throughout the application process and to involve them in the development of the corridor management plan.

**Recommendation:** The Advisory Committee agreed it should be an absolute requirement that: "Each agency, entity, or government with jurisdiction and responsibility for any roadway nominated for designation shall approve of any application submitted for a byway or backway designation."

## DISCUSSION ITEM 5

### **Adjacent Land Jurisdiction**

Adjacent land ownership was discussed at the 3/25/94 meeting and the recommendation was: "Routes must have strong local support, continuing advocacy, and local commitment to a scenic byway or backway designation. There must be a commitment by the majority of agencies and landowners with jurisdiction along the proposed route."

This issue was revisited because the concept of majority was questioned. For example, what if one landowner (e.g. Forest Service) owned the majority of land along a route and voted for a scenic byway or backway designation, and two small property owners voted against the designation? Would the designation be denied even though the owner of the majority of the land had voted in favor of it?

**Recommendation:** The Advisory Committee unanimously agreed to amend the 3/25/94 recommendation to read: "Routes must have strong local support, continuing advocacy, and local commitment to a scenic byway or backway designation."

## DISCUSSION ITEM 6

### **Public Input**

Members of the Three-County Network of Western Montana Citizen Groups were present for a portion of the meeting. They had submitted comments and recommendations to the Committee in writing (attached) and made themselves available for questions from members.

The Advisory Committee commended the group for their work and level of knowledge and understanding of the scenic byways/backways program. It was noted the group's recommendations were directly in line with actions taken by the Advisory Committee.

## DISCUSSION ITEM 7

### **Recommended Program Alternatives**

Prior to the meeting, recommended program alternatives were distributed to committee members for their review.

### **Program Scope**

As set out in the attached recommended alternatives, program scope was discussed at length. The Committee was unable to arrive at consensus regarding the definition of and development of a

"master plan" or department methods for eligible route inventory. It was decided that a subcommittee made up of Clint Blackwood, Cordell Ringell, John Bloomquist, Doug Smith, and Wesley Main would, by conference call, work with members of the study team and Department of Transportation representatives to arrive at committee recommendations on this issue.

The subcommittee held a conference call on Tuesday, March 31. Members agreed it was important for the Department of Transportation to have a way to ensure submission of appropriate route applications without having to commit resources to multitudes of pre-application information requests and follow-up time on inappropriate routes. To accomplish that, the subcommittee made the following recommendation:

**Recommendation:** The Department of Transportation will develop an initial system of eligible routes based on absolute criteria relative to roadway characteristics and safety conditions. The Department will also develop a mechanism for the public to suggest additional routes.

#### Review and Selection Process

**Recommendation:** The review and recommendation of byways applications will be conducted by a constituent-oriented review committee. Department staff will review applications for completeness before submitting to the review committee which will in turn, make designation recommendations to the Highway Commission.

#### Administration/Management and Funding

**Recommendation:** For the immediate, short-term future, the recommended scenic byways/backways program will be administered by integrating the planning, management, and budget requirements into existing Department of Transportation capabilities. Management requirements of the byways/backways program would be absorbed by existing staff. No immediate additional budget allocations should be requested.

#### Facilities

**Recommendation:** In the beginning phases of the program, existing facilities such as pull-outs, rest areas, passing lanes, bike paths, etc., will be improved as planned, rather than proposing new development. As funds become available, development of facilities can be expanded.

#### Signing

**Recommendation:** The initial program should include basic signing with placement of standard signs at the beginning and end points, "trailblazer" signs located at key points along the route, and directional signs located on adjoining routes.

#### Promotion

**Recommendation:** Program promotion should be a cooperative effort between the Department and other agencies, corporations, or public interest groups. Combined resources should be used to effectively increase the awareness of Montana's scenic byways/backways through statewide information meetings (for potential applicants and interested parties), guides and reference materials, travel brochures, convention booths, and write-ups on state maps, etc.

#### Oversight

**Recommendation:** To ensure the preservation of byways/backways character, route specific oversight committees should be established on an assignment or volunteer basis. These committees would be responsible for overseeing compliance activities on the specific route(s) within their area.

#### Other

**Recommendation:** The Advisory Committee encourages the Montana Department of Transportation to assign and maintain an appropriate level of priority to the scenic byways/backways program.

## DISCUSSION ITEM 8

### De-designation

There needs to be a de-designation process built into the Scenic Byways/Backways Program. The Advisory Committee concluded that there would be two circumstances which determined when a route should be reviewed for de-designation: 1) When a community(ies) no longer wants its route designated (voluntary removal); and 2) when a segment(s) of a designated route has violated restrictions set out in the corridor management plan (non-conformance).

**Recommendation:** A removal process allowing a route to be voluntarily de-designated would have to include a public meeting of the stakeholders involved. Voluntary delisting must be given careful and serious consideration before action is implemented. During the nomination phases of the process, all stakeholders should clearly understand the pros and cons of designating routes in their area.

Non-conformance will be measured against the terms or restrictions set out in the corridor management plan. To provide fair assessment of non-compliance, independent route review teams, including public volunteers and Department of Transportation staff, should conduct annual audits to ensure conformance. (Local representatives from each of the areas with scenic byway/backway designations could be included as members of the review teams.) If a route is in non-conformance, action should be taken to help the community(ies) resolve the problems. If the problems cannot be resolved, recommendation would be made to the Highway Commission to de-designate that route.

(Maintaining conformance could be nurtured by developing an oversight committee of local people who would regularly assess public attitudes, monitor non-conformance changes, and act as a liaison to the review team.)

## DISCUSSION ITEM 9

### Application Narrative

The Application Narrative is a summary of the absolute requirements and criteria previously developed by the Advisory Committee. It will be incorporated into the program procedures manual and can be distributed as an introductory document for people interested in learning more about the Scenic Byways/Backways Program.

The roadway jurisdictional and land use recommendations arrived at under discussion items 4 & 5 will be incorporated into the Application Narrative. Advisory committee members were asked to review the document for recommended changes or additions.

Committee members questioned whether "identifiable shoulder" had been declared an absolute requirement for byways. To clarify, tapes of the 3/25/94 meeting were reviewed.

At the 3/25/94 meeting, the committee felt a byway should, as a safety precaution, have a shoulder usable by pedestrians or bicyclists. However, it was pointed out that many Montana highways do not have identifiable shoulders, including parts of Highway 2. When asked whether AASHTO standards address shoulder requirements, committee member Gilmore said the requirements set by ADT are based on the functions of the highway - general traffic volume and truck traffic. The final committee action was an absolute requirement that reads, "A byway route must be paved." The wording in the Application Narrative will be changed to read: "Only existing roads that can safely accommodate expected traffic volumes will be considered for either a scenic byway or backway."

Byways must be paved."

With regard to corridor management plans, the Committee was told the application packet would include a how-to manual to help applicants develop an acceptable plan.

**Recommendation:** Number 4 under Absolute Requirements for State Scenic Byways Nomination should read: "A corridor management plan consistent with federal, state, tribal, local and other land use/management plans must accompany each nomination."

**Recommendation:** The application package should contain a very detailed section on corridor plan development, addressing goals and objectives, guidelines, and examples.

## DISCUSSION ITEM 10

### Program Name/Logo

**Recommendation:** In order to be more inclusive of what Montana's byways and backways routes represent, the Committee recommended the name Big Sky Byways/Backways to identify the program.

Potential program logos were reviewed by committee members. No final recommendations were made.

## DISCUSSION ITEM 12

### What's Next?

The final report from the study team, will be reviewed by Department of Transportation officials and presented to the Montana Highway Commission for action, probably in August of this year. The Advisory Committee will be kept advised of future action. If program development continues, the Advisory Committee will be called upon to assist and provide input.

## **APPENDIX H**

### **Select Visual Simulations**











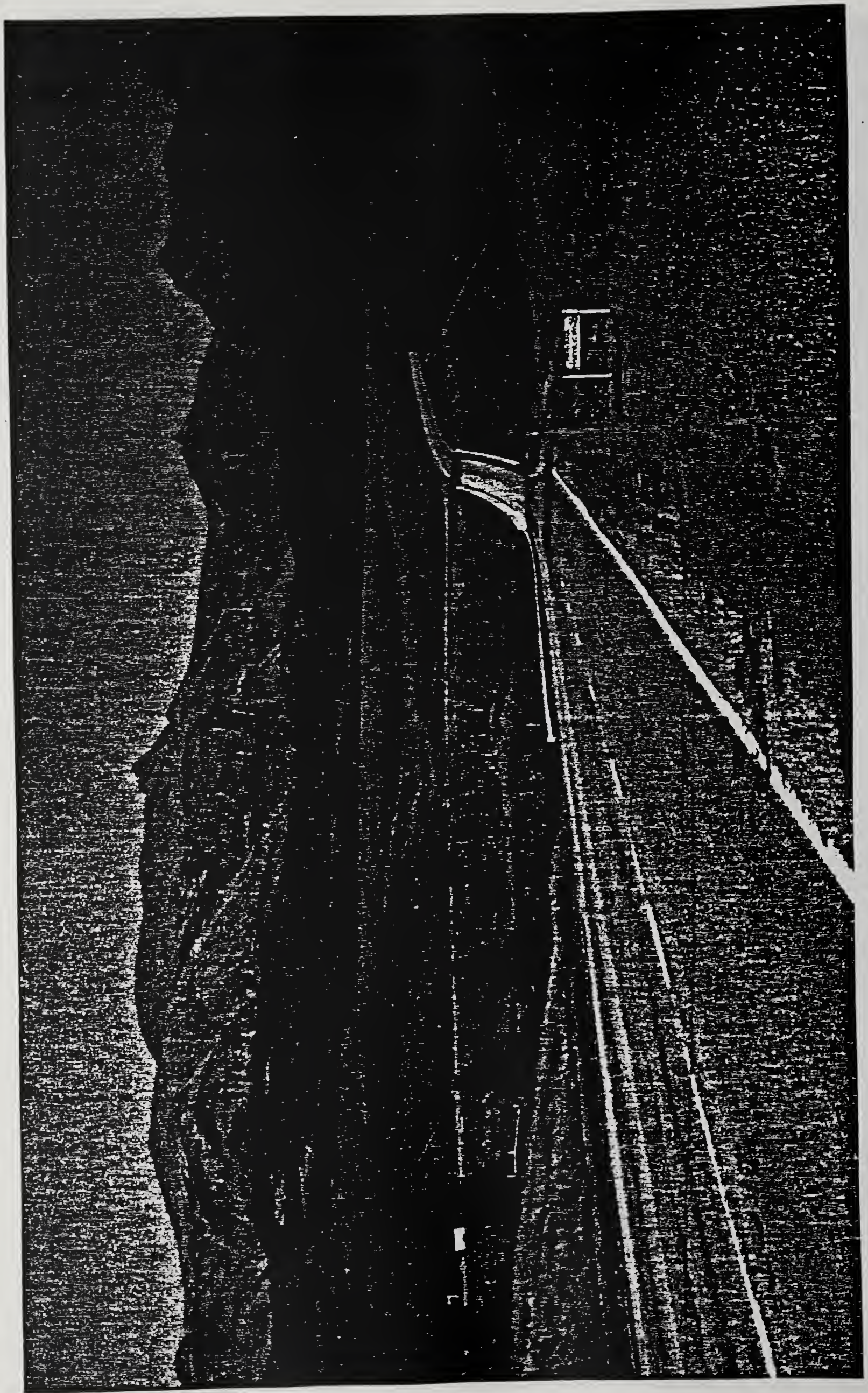
















# APPENDIX I

## SCENIC AMERICA CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN BROCHURE





## SCENIC AMERICA

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### CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR SCENIC BYWAYS

#### THE CASE FOR SCENIC RESOURCE CONSERVATION

The protection, conservation and enhancement of scenic byways and their scenic resources face many challenges. Communities must recognize that the conservation of scenic resources, as well as the historic, cultural, archeological, natural and recreational resources of scenic byways, is important. Not only do these resources have innate values, but they also generate economic benefits for the communities and corridors in which the resources are located. By protecting scenic byways, the nation, its states and communities can preserve community character, enhance the quality of life, retain rural landscapes, and conserve the intrinsic resources that create the potential for successful tourism and productive economic development.

Scenic byways are roadways that provide an enjoyable and relaxing experience for travelers. The most important assets of a scenic byway are the intrinsic resources that form its character and merit recognition. Once scenic byways have been identified and designated by a federal, state or local scenic byway program, care should be taken to conserve the scenic byway's special character. In some cases, conservation of a byway's intrinsic resources has not been considered and its character has been lost or damaged, also diminishing the byway's associated economic and environmental benefits.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Act of 1991 (ISTEA) mandated the creation of the National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads Programs. A National Scenic Byways Advisory Committee was mandated to guide the program's development. The Advisory Committee has recommended that a corridor management plan be developed as part of the required documentation for every National Scenic Byway and All-American Road designation.

#### CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLANS

Corridor management plans define strategies to conserve the resources of scenic byways based on regulatory and review powers and the support of local citizens and landowners. Corridor management plans identify strategies for protection of the intrinsic resources, improvements of the corridor for local users and travellers, interpretation of the byway's intrinsic values, promotion, economic development and public participation in the process. The plan should address all areas of the scenic byway corridor which comprise the road, its right-of-way,



the adjacent land areas and the viewshed, which includes all areas visible from the roadway. The purpose of the corridor management plan is to conserve the intrinsic resources of the scenic byway in a sustainable balance with economic development and tourism. The plan describes the means to protect the byway from activities that have a negative impact on the intrinsic resources; promote economic development and tourism; enhance intrinsic resources and improve byway facilities; and guide future development in keeping with the byway's character.

The development of corridor management plans should be closely integrated with the scenic byway designation process. Although designation processes vary depending on their specific program, all should involve nominations that describe the scenic byway's intrinsic resources and eligibility. During the preparation of the designation application for the scenic byway, there should be careful documentation and assessment of the byway corridor, which identifies the significant scenic, historic, cultural, recreational, natural and archeological resources. In addition, designation documents may identify existing and potential threats to the integrity of the resources.

Corridor management planning is focused on managing the intrinsic resources along the scenic byway. Development of the plan may address needed improvements to the roadway or its facilities, interpretative programs and tourism promotion to increase awareness of the intrinsic resources by the local community and travelling public. Equally important, the corridor management plan must anticipate future activities that may improve or degrade the character and activities of the corridor. Identification of strategies to generate and maintain public participation and support for the development and implementation of the corridor management plan is another key component.

## **ELEMENTS OF A CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **1. Description of the resources of the scenic byway**

As conservation of the scenic byway's resources is the purpose of the corridor management plan, the development of the plan begins with a review of these resources. The scenic, historic, cultural, archeological, natural and recreational resources are typically identified and described in the nomination for designation. If any additional information or documentation is needed, it should be collected in this initial phase. This might include photo or video documentation of the corridor; a review of current policy, plans and land use regulations of local communities in the corridor; meetings with groups, individuals and businesses who have interest or concerns about the corridor; or any other information to ensure that the description of resources and issues in the corridor is current and complete.

### **2. Analysis of the context of the resources**

In this phase an understanding of how the identified resources fit into the fabric of the community and the corridor is needed.

Consider the quality of the existing context of each significant resource element that is identified in the corridor. What is the significance of each resource in scenic, historic, cultural, archeological, natural and recreational terms to the corridor, the region, the state or the nation?

What are the relative significance of resources and the resource elements? From where is each element visible in the corridor? What is its backdrop or visual context? At what distance can you first see the element? How does it relate to adjacent land uses and activities? Consider the size and style of possible or future activities, including building height; position and orientation of buildings on the property; typical setbacks along the road and zoning setbacks; location of parking, driveways, landscaping, utilities and other elements that influence the context for the scenic byway's significant elements.

The visual character and context of each identified resource should be analyzed in two ways: individually and collectively. The visual quality of the entire corridor should also be studied in detail. The distinguishing feature of scenic byways is they are experienced as corridors and not as a series of individual sites. The composition or pattern of resources within the corridor forms the character of the scenic byway. Therefore, visual character is always a consideration for every scenic byway, even those which have not been recognized primarily for scenic resources but whose primary significance is recreational, historic, cultural, natural or archeological.

### **3. Evaluation of the potential for improvement or deterioration**

Once the description and analysis of the existing character of the scenic byway is complete, the future needs of the byway should be considered.

How can the byway's character be preserved while accommodating new uses and activities? What are possible enhancements of the corridor in keeping with the recognized character? What are the opportunities to increase multi-modal opportunities for use of the corridor by bicyclists, pedestrians, transit, rail or water passengers? Are there any proposed planning or zoning provisions that are likely to encourage or permit future development that will improve or detract from the quality of the resource? How can the features of the byway be interpreted to provide greater interest and understanding? What are the opportunities for economic development and tourism? How will increased tourism impact the corridor? Will there be new or additional commercial and tourist services needed? If so, where are the facilities likely to be located? Consider not only building-centered services (restaurant, gift shop, restrooms, museums, motel, etc.) but also site and corridor activities (road widening, additional turn lanes or traffic signals; parking and pull-offs, interpretative information areas, directional signage, new landscaping, etc.)

### **4. A plan for the corridor**

The corridor management plan describes the goals and objectives for conservation and enhancement of the corridor, summarizes the conclusions of the analysis and evaluation phases and identifies specific actions that will fulfill the plan's objectives. A detailed plan provides clear and well-defined standards for corridor management efforts. The plan may be organized linearly, according to the distinct geographic and visual character of the road or by the category of the resource elements, such as protection of viewsheds, architectural character, provisions for interpretation, etc.

As part of the development of the corridor management plan, it will be necessary to select and/or develop techniques for implementation. Public participation and support are very important factors in any successful corridor management effort. The public should be informed and involved early in the designation process and should remain involved throughout the development and implementation of the corridor management plan. Specific strategies should be developed to encourage and utilize public participation.

Corridor management plans generally utilize local activities to implement their objectives. Depending on the public interest and regulatory powers of local communities, the management tools may include any one or a combination of the following:

- \*community group that sponsors or supports the scenic byway and acts to ensure stewardship of the scenic byway resources through local activities;
- \*policy guidelines for protection of the scenic byway resources;
- \*comprehensive planning that includes the goals and objectives described in the corridor plan;
- \*creation of a local review board to address projects and activities in the scenic byway corridor, such as an architectural review, visual environmental or conservation commission;
- \*referral of any activities or projects in the scenic byway corridor to the planning commission for review;
- \*use of traditional zoning regulations, for example: setbacks for buildings and parking areas, height and bulk controls; billboard and on-premise sign ordinances; landscape requirements for screening or parking areas, etc.;
- \* creation of special overlay zones with detailed controls for the scenic byway corridor, such as scenic area zones, scenic byway corridor overlay, ridgeline protection overlay or historic district zone, which all are used to protect some of the characteristics that could be critical to scenic byway character;
- \*subdivision regulations and required site plan reviews can provide opportunities to evaluate the location of curb cuts and driveways along a byway; the orientation, clustering and siting of buildings and facilities in relation to critical resources; the use of vegetation and topography to preserve existing context; the color and type of architectural materials in relation to the scenic byway;
- \* operation and maintenance standards for the roadway; and
- \* road design standards and specifications that are developed to support the objectives of the corridor plan.

Although most corridor management plans operate at the local level, there may be some opportunities to implement the corridor management plan objectives at the state level. These include the following:

- \* some states require or recommend local corridor management plans for all state designated scenic byways.
- \* state environmental review processes often include a review of scenic, historical, cultural, archeological, natural or other impacts. During the required review of these individual issues for state projects, a well-developed scenic byway corridor plan provides the basis for identifying and evaluating impacts, to the scenic byway;
- \*state Department of Transportation planning processes can incorporate the scenic byway

corridor plans in state-wide transportation planning and construction efforts; (the Long Range Plan, a 20 year plan, and the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) can include scenic byways projects); and

- \* if zoning exists at the state level it can be used to implement corridor management plans similar to the zoning techniques used at the local level.

In addition to government regulatory provisions, scenic byways' scenic, historic, cultural, recreational, natural and archeological resources have often been protected by scenic or conservation easements. Individual land owners along the corridor may be willing to donate or sell scenic easements that limit the types of activities that can occur within the viewshed of the scenic byway. Easements can be a very effective way to protect scenic byways because they are permanent. Easements convey or become part of the title of the property, so that they continue even when ownership changes.

### **5. Implementation of the corridor management plan**

Once the appropriate tools and techniques have been selected to implement the corridor plan, the new processes, ordinances, and/or commissions need to be approved and established by local governments. Governments can formally adopt principles in support of the goals and objectives of the scenic byway and incorporate the goals of the corridor management plan in their land use policies and plans. Implementation should begin as quickly as possible. The cooperation of local governments and citizens in the scenic byway designation and corridor management planning will keep the process moving expeditiously.

### **6. A follow-up process to evaluate and monitor corridor management**

No matter what type of corridor management techniques the community chooses to protect the scenic byway, there should be an on-going process to evaluate the effectiveness of the corridor management plan. There are many agencies, businesses, organizations and citizens that will be impacted by the plan in ways that can be anticipated as well as impacts that are unexpected. The plan should be a flexible guiding document that is updated regularly.

## **PARTICIPATION IN THE CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS**

The most effective corridor management plans will be the result of broad public participation commencing from the preparation of the designation application and continuing through the implementation of the corridor management plan. Coordination among all public and private interests can be accommodated through public hearings, advisory commissions or special task forces.

There is a major role for planning, design and preservation professionals in the corridor management planning process. Although members of the local community are familiar with the scenic byway corridor and its attributes, there is no substitute for the expertise provided by professionals specially skilled in community or rural planning, landscape architecture and visual assessment, architecture, natural resources, transportation planning and engineering, historic preservation, archeology, economic forecasting, tourism, marketing, etc. Professional assistance should be incorporated as early as possible. Look to local government planning staff; state

departments of transportation, commerce, tourism, economic development, natural resources and historic preservation; federal agencies, including FHWA, US Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and others especially those with state, regional or local field staff; as well as private consultants as possible sources of assistance.

### THE CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN SUMMARY

1. The objective of corridor management plans is to conserve the scenic, historic, cultural, recreational, natural and archeological resources of the scenic byway.
2. The specific resources and their recognized qualities should be identified and documented as the basis for the development of the corridor management plan.
3. The corridor management plan should address the context and viewshed of the scenic byway which extends beyond the limits of the roadway itself.
4. The purpose of the corridor management plan is to conserve the intrinsic resources of the scenic byway in a sustainable balance with economic development and tourism. The plan should protect the byway from activities that have negative impact on the intrinsic resources; promote economic development and tourism; enhance intrinsic resources and improve byway facilities; and guide future development in keeping with the byway's character.
5. The most effective plans are produced by the broad involvement of the community and local agencies.
6. Corridor management plans should use any techniques or combinations of techniques that are effective for protection of the scenic byway resources.
7. Once the corridor management plan is developed it should be implemented as quickly as possible and then monitored for effectiveness.
8. Continuing community advocacy and participation is highly desirable.

7/8/93 comp2

## **APPENDIX J**

### **CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTING PROPERTY GIFTS**



## Appendix J: Criteria for Accepting Property Gifts

The San Juan Preservation Trust is a private, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization founded in 1979 by residents who were concerned about protecting scenic, agricultural, and ecologically important lands in the San Juan Islands in Washington State. The trust accepts gifts of land and easements under the following guidelines:

1. The area is an important undisturbed natural area, or is adjacent to an important undisturbed natural area, or is adjacent to lands under conservation easements or is adjacent to Trust-owned property.
2. The property has characteristics which should be protected from development, such as scenic open space, views of water, buffer qualities, a good soil composition, or wildlife habitat.
3. The property is visible from public lands, public roads, public parks, or from already Trust-protected lands.
4. The property has important historical or current land use activity, such as forestry management, farming, public enjoyment, aquaculture.
5. The protection of the property would enhance the quality of life for the community.
6. If the property is to be accepted for resale for the benefit of the Trust rather than for preservation, the property owner shall be fully informed of that purpose.
7. The owner shall be made aware that the property may be transferred to another qualified resident.
8. Endowment funding is necessary for the long term defense of all Trust lands. An endowment fund is established for each parcel of land accepted by the Trust. It is expected that the land donor would appreciate and participate in this essential process.

Source: Saving America's Country Side, National Trust for Historic Preservation



## APPENDIX K

### EXAMPLE OF SCENIC EASEMENT, PETOSKEY MICHIGAN



**Appendix K: Example of Scenic Easement, Petoskey Michigan**

**SCENIC EASEMENT**

THIS DEED OF A SCENIC EASEMENT, made and entered into this day of \_\_\_\_\_ (date) by and between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ whose address is \_\_\_\_\_ ("Grantor"), and the EMMET COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION, of Petoskey, Michigan, ("Grantee");

**WITNESSETH:**

WHEREAS, Grantor is the owner of certain real property in Emmet County, Michigan, more particularly described in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated by this reference (the "Property"); and

WHEREAS, the Property is located adjacent to U.S. 31 a scenic highway along the shore of Lake Michigan that is know to possess outstanding scenic values of great importance to the Grantor and the public; and

WHEREAS, Emmet County has a tourist-based economy and the scenic quality of the highways are known to attract tourists and therefore the County considers the preservation of scenic roadside areas to be an important goal; and

WHEREAS, Grantor intends that the conservation values of the Property be preserved and maintained in accordance with this scenic easement and the preservation of said Property is consistent with the comprehensive land use plan for Emmet County; and

WHEREAS, Grantee agrees by accepting this grant to honor the intentions of the Grantor stated herein and to preserve and protect scenic values of the Property in perpetuity;

NOW, THEREFORE, in condition of the above and the mutual covenants, terms, conditions, and restrictions contained herein, and pursuant to the laws of the State of Michigan including, but not limited to, the Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement Act, MCLA 399.251 et seq., Grantor hereby conveys to Grantee a conservation easement in perpetuity over the Property of the nature and character and to the extent hereinafter set forth ("Easement").

1. Purpose. It is the purpose of this Easement to assure that the portions of the Property visible from U.S. 31 will be retained forever in its current natural, scenic, and/or open space condition and to prevent any use of the Property that will significantly impair or interfere with the conservation values of the Property. Grantor intends that this Easement will confine the use of the portions of this Property, visible from U.S. 31, to such activities as are consistent with the purpose of this Easement.

2. Rights of Grantee. To accomplish the purpose of this Easement the following rights are conveyed to Grantee by this Easement:

(a) To preserve and protect the scenic values of the Property;

(b) To enter upon the Property at reasonable times in order to monitor Grantor's compliance with and otherwise enforce the terms of this Easement; provided that such entry shall be upon prior reasonable notice to Grantor, and Grantee shall not unreasonably interfere with Grantor's use and quiet enjoyment of the Property; and

(c) To prevent any activity on or use of the Property that is inconsistent with the purpose of this Easement and to require the restoration of such areas or features of the property that may be damaged by inconsistent activity or use.

3. Prohibited Uses. Any activity on or use of the Property inconsistent with the purpose of this Easement is prohibited. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following activities and uses are expressly prohibited:

A. The placement of any signs or billboards on the Property, except that signs, whose placement, number, size, and design do not significantly diminish the scenic character of the Property, may be displayed to state the name and address of the Property and the names of persons living on the Property, to advertize an on-site business activity such as a Bed and Breakfast lodging or art studio, to advertize the Property for sale or rent, and to post the Property to control unauthorized entry or use, nor shall any right for the display of billboard advertising signs be granted.

B. The accumulation of trash, refuse, junk or unsightly material on the portions of the Property visible from U.S. 31.

C. The extraction of any mineral materials from the portions of the Property visible from U.S. 31 by surface methods, nor shall any right for the removal thereof be granted.

4. Reserved Rights. Grantor reserves to themselves, and to their personal representative, heirs, successors, and assigns, all rights accruing from their ownership of the Property, including the right to engage in or permit or invite others to engage in all uses of the Property that are not inconsistent with the purpose of this Easement.

5. Access. No right of access by the general public to any portion of the Property is conveyed by this Easement.

6. Successors. The covenants, terms, conditions, and restrictions of this Easement shall be binding upon, and inure to the benefit of, the parties hereto and their respective personal representatives, heirs, successors, and assigns and shall continue as a servitude running in perpetuity with the Property.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF Grantors and Grantee have set their hands on the day and year first above written.

GRANTORS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

EMMET COUNTY PARKS COMMISSION

\_\_\_\_\_

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Emmet County, Commissioners



**APPENDIX L**

**EXAMPLE OF SCENIC HIGHWAY DISTRICTS  
ORDINANCE  
CHARLESTON COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA**



Appendix L.: Example of Scenic Highway Districts Ordinance,  
Charleston County, South Carolina

Authorization of Scenic Highway Districts

Sec. 25.10.19 GENERALLY

The Planning Board and/or County Council may recommend and the County Council may adopt amendments to the zoning map and to the text of this ordinance establishing Scenic highway Districts, after the conditions set forth in Sec. 25.10.40 have been met. Recommendation and adoption of such amendment shall be in accordance with Article 97.40.

A scenic highway zoning district, if approved, shall be superimposed over the existing zoning district classification(s) assigned to the area. All uses normally permitted for the existing zoning category as prescribed by this ordinance shall be permitted with the exception of the limitation prescribed in Article 97.40.

Section 25.10.20 PURPOSE OF A SCENIC HIGHWAY ZONING DISTRICT

The basic purpose of the Scenic Highway district is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty adjacent to and along out County highways in conjunction with the existing zoning classification(s). The program is established to prevent unsightly developments which may tend to mar or detract from the natural beauty and to exercise such reasonable control over the land within the restricted areas as may be necessary to accomplish this objective.

Secondly, a purpose of the scenic district is to eliminate, as much as possible, undue harshness to the eye and general chaos that could develop along the roadways in Charleston County and to insure a pleasant view free from clutter and/or visual blight.

Third, to protect and perpetuate our heritage.

Sec. 97.40.50. COUNTY PLANNING BOARD STUDY

1. The Planning Board shall review that application for a Scenic Highway zoning classification in the same manner as presented herein for other amendments to this ordinance.
2. The Planning Board shall determine a map designation for the district consisting of a designation of the district and a serial number, so that each district shall be individually identified.

Sec. 97.40.60. CRITERIA FOR SCENIC HIGHWAY ZONING DISTRICT

In addition to the regular criteria prescribed for a given zoning district by these or other lawful laws or regulations, the following basic criteria shall be imposed upon any district selected for a Scenic Highway classification, permitted uses stipulated elsewhere in these regulations notwithstanding.

1. The designated area shall be maintained free of outdoor

advertising signs and authorized accessory signs may not be freestanding until a uniform design shall have been approved under Sec. 97.40.40.

2. Dumps established for the disposal or storage of fill, gravel, pipe, ashes, trash, rubbish, sawdust, garbage, offal, or any unsightly or offensive material shall not be permitted.
3. Salvage yards, used car lots, mobile home sales, or any other activity not visually attractive shall not be permitted.
4. Trees, six inches in diameter or over, or shrubs will not be destroyed, cut or removed except when cutting is necessary for the maintenance or enhancement of beautification of the district as defined under Se. 97.40.40. The intention is to preserve the natural beauty of wooded areas as far as is reasonably possible.
5. General farming including the addition or expansion of farm buildings, is normally permitted and encouraged. However, fur farming or farms operated for the disposal of garbage or related material are prohibited.
6. New residential, commercial, and industrial uses shall be carefully planned in order to retain an open land appearance and present desirable views from becoming obstructed.
7. Nonconforming uses and structures shall be governed by Article 30.50.

#### Sec. 97.40.70. ACTIVITIES NOT NORMALLY PERMITTED WITHIN A SCENIC HIGHWAY DISTRICT

The following categories will not normally be permitted in a Scenic Highway District; however, with natural screening (trees, shrubs, etc.), they may be permitted by obtaining a Conditional Use Permit in accordance with Article 96.40:

- |          |                                                                                                                               |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2,3.     | Manufacturing Facilities                                                                                                      |
| 481.     | Electric Generating Plants, Utility Substations, Transformer Banks, Overhead Transmission lines, and Above Ground Pipe Lines. |
| 484.     | Sewage Disposal                                                                                                               |
| 485.     | Solid Waste Disposal                                                                                                          |
| 621.     | Laundering, Dry Cleaning and Dyeing Plants                                                                                    |
| 6241     | Crematories                                                                                                                   |
| 815,816. | Stockyards                                                                                                                    |
| 6831.    | Vocational and Trade Schools                                                                                                  |
| 7223.    | Race tracks, or Courses for Autos, Motorcycles, Motorbikes, Horses, Etc.                                                      |
| 7312.    | Amusement Parks                                                                                                               |
| 821.     | Agricultural Processing                                                                                                       |
| 85.      | Mining, including Burrow Pits.                                                                                                |

#### Sec. 97.40.75. REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

The period within which the Planning Board's report shall be submitted to County Council will be 90 days from date application was submitted.

Sec. 97.40.80. ACTION BY COUNTY COUNCIL

1. Scenic Highway zoning districts application to County Council shall consist of plans, agreements, inventories (trees) and other pertinent documents submitted with the application.
2. The County Council shall review the Scenic Highway District amendment in the same manner as provided for other amendments to this ordinance.

## **Appendix C2**

### **Adopted standards and rules for designation, maintenance and reconstruction of scenic roads**

#### **(STATE OF VERMONT TRANSPORTATION BOARD)**

These standards and rules provide procedures for use in selection and designation of scenic highways as a means of preserving the scenic quality of the rural landscape. In addition, they describe techniques for reconstruction and maintenance of designated scenic highways in a manner which will preserve scenic quality without reduction in the level of service or safety required by users of the highway.

#### **Section 1. DESIGNATION AND DISCONTINUANCE OF SCENIC ROADS**

(a) The criteria to be used by the State and Towns in designating scenic roads shall be those contained in the document entitled "Criteria for the Designation of Scenic Roads," as promulgated by the (Transportation Board) as a part of these rules and regulations.

(b) Such criteria may be reviewed annually by the (Scenery Preservation Council) for continued appropriateness and may be revised, as necessary by the (Transportation Board) on the recommendation of the (Scenery Preservation Council.)

(c) A publication entitled "Designating Scenic Roads, A (Vermont) Fieldguide," adopted by the (Transportation Board) shall serve as the official guide for the use of the designation criteria.

(d) Prior to the public hearing which must precede designation or discontinuation of any highway as a scenic road, the (State Transportation Board) or legislative body of the town shall give Public Notice of the date, place and purpose of the hearing. Public Notice here and at other points in these rules shall mean notice in a newspaper of general publication in the municipality affected, the posting of such notice in one or more public places within the municipality, and by written notice to the district transportation administrator, regional and town planning commissions not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the public hearing.

## **Section 2. IDENTIFICATION OF TOWN SCENIC HIGHWAYS**

**(a) Local Government Officials shall identify designated scenic roads.**

**(b) Local Government officials shall include proposed expenditures on scenic roads, if any, in the (Town Highways Annual Plan). If an annual plan includes such proposed expenditures, a copy of the plan shall be submitted to the relevant Regional Planning Commission.**

## **Section 3. MAINTENANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION OF TOWN SCENIC ROADS**

### **(a) Maintenance**

**At the time a highway is selected as a Scenic Road, the criteria responsible for this designation shall be clearly identified and recorded on the form entitled "Criteria for the Designation of Scenic Road," which may be obtained from district transportation offices or regional planning commissions. When a town designates a road as scenic, it shall enter this completed form in its records and transmit a copy to the (Agency of Transportation). Scenic roads will be maintained as nearly as possible in the condition which existed at the time of designation; that is the essential components such as width, alignment and grade of surface will not be changed materially; elevations and locations of ditch lines shall remain constant except for minimal adjustment required by normal cleaning operations. The roadway surface shall not be changed except for graveling or retreatment.**

### **Permitted Roadside Maintenance**

**Permitted roadside maintenance shall be detailed at the time of designation. Normally this would be restricted to the removal of dead trees and brush cutting to protect established views. For example, if scenic or panoramic views are the reason for the designation, underbrush and small trees shall be removed as necessary to protect the view. If the designation was created because of stone walls or similar unique roadside features, these factors should be noted and maintenance activities adjusted to protect and enhance them.**

### **(b) Reconstruction**

**When modification of a scenic road is required by change in the function or use of the road, or as a result of a natural disaster, the local legislative body shall investigate the impact of such modification on the criteria responsible for the scenic designation.**

**Scenic roads determined to require reconstruction shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Agency of Transportation Standard A-65 and in**

accordance with the techniques and recommendations contained in the booklet, *The Vermont Backroad*.

The legislative body of a town may appeal to the (Vermont Transportation Board) for a variance from these standards, if considered necessary for the preservation of specific scenic features.

#### **Modification of Scenic Road**

Before modifications are made to a scenic road, the legislative body shall conduct a hearing, following adequate public notice, as specified under 1(d), to discuss the effects of the proposed modification and the possible removal of the road from the scenic classification.

A detailed plan to the proposed modification, including measures to minimize adverse effects, shall be presented at the public hearing. Prior to the public hearing the selectmen are encouraged to discuss proposed modifications with the district transportation administrator and appropriate regional and municipal planning commissions. The selectmen shall allow these same parties two weeks after hearing in which to provide written comment. At the hearing, the local legislative body shall describe the effect of the proposed modification on the criteria responsible for designation and shall receive testimony from the public.

#### **Action by Legislative Body**

After considering all available information and testimony, the legislative body shall determine if the need for the proposed modification is sufficient to justify any reduction in the scenic quality of the road. It shall publicize its decision, which shall include the principal reasons in support of that decision, by posting in the town clerk's office and by written notice to those parties identified under 1(d) "public notice." No modification of the scenic road may be initiated for seven (7) days from the date of posting an notification to the parties.

If it is determined that the proposed modification will result in the elimination of the scenic quality of the road so that it will no longer meet selection criteria, the legislative body may proceed to discontinue the road's scenic designation.

#### **Section 4. EMERGENCY REPAIRS**

(a) In the case of a natural disaster where the highway becomes impassable or unsafe for public travel and access must be provided, maintenance and/or reconstruction standards may be suspended with the approval of the legislative body for the purpose of emergency repairs. Notice of this action shall be

submitted in writing within three (3) days of the proposed action to the appropriate regional planning commission and district transportation administrator. A detailed report of the repairs and the effect of the scenic criteria shall be submitted to the same parties within thirty (30) days following completion of repairs.

Emergency repair operations should be conducted in a manner which will avoid or reduce adverse effects on the criteria responsible for designation. In emergency situations, the concern for the public good and safety will be given precedent over scenic considerations.

## **Section 5. SIGNING OF SCENIC ROADS**

(a) Signs as required for purposes of traffic safety shall be in accordance with the Uniform Manual on Traffic Control Devices for States and Highways as published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

## **Section 6. MAINTENANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION OF STATE SYSTEM SCENIC ROADS**

### **(a) Maintenance**

At the time a highway is selected as a scenic road, the criteria responsible for this designation shall be clearly identified and properly recorded. Scenic roads will be maintained as nearly as possible in the condition which existed at the time of designation; that is the essential components such as width, alignment and grade of surface will not be materially changed; elevations and locations of ditch lines shall remain constant except for minimal adjustment required by normal cleaning operations.

### **(b) Reconstruction**

The design for reconstruction of scenic roads shall be developed in conformity with current standards, modified as appropriate to preserve the scenic character of the road.

The plan and description of improvement projects not presented for discussion at a public hearing shall be submitted for comment to the appropriate regional planning commission which shall respond within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of such plans and description.



## **APPENDIX M**

### **TYPICAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



## Appendix M: Typical Local Government Comprehensive Plan

The table of contents of the comprehensive plan for Vernon, Vermont (1984 pop. 1,280), adopted by the Board of Selectmen in 1986, shows how one rural community organized its plan. Vernon's 42-page plan covers not only land use and the community's natural, recreational, cultural, and scenic resources, but also housing, transportation, economic development, and public services. Other communities might choose to include more or fewer topics, or to organize them in different ways. Note that Vernon chose to present only a small number of maps.

### TOWN OF VERNON

- Introductory Comments
- Purpose of the Town Plan
- Structure of the Town Plan
- Statement of Objectives

#### I. Planning for Land Use and Economic Development:

##### General Policies

- A. Capability of the Land
- B. Protection of Natural Resources
- C. Public & Private Capital Investment
- D. Planning for Growth

#### II. Community Profile: Specific Policies and Recommendations

- A. Population Trends and Projections
- B. Housing
- C. Transportation

#### III. Resource and Economic Development: Specific Policies and Recommendations

- A. Employment and Economic Base
- B. Economic Growth

#### IV. Natural Resources Use and Conservation: Specific Policies and Recommendations

- A. Agricultural Resources
- B. Forest Land
- C. Water Resources
- D. Wildlife Habitat
- E. Fragile Areas
- F. Flood Hazard Areas
- G. Soils
- H. Earth Resources

#### V. Recreational, Cultural and Scenic Resources: Specific Policies and Recommendations

- A. Public Recreational Resources
- B. Historic and Architectural Resources
- C. Scenic Resources

IV. Government Facilities and Public Utilities: Specific Policies

- A. Planning for Growth
- B. Public Facilities or Services Adjoining Agricultural or Forestry Lands
- C. Planning for Transportation and Utility Corridors
- D. Planning for Solid Waste Disposal
- E. Privately Owned Facilities and Services
- F. Fire and Police Protection
- G. Education and Libraries
- H. Health
- I. Town Government Administration

VII. Town Plan Maps and Explanation

- Map 1: Physical Limitations to Development
- Map 2: Resource Areas and Sites
- Map 3: Town Farmlands Map
- Map 4: Groundwater Favorability Areas
- Map 5: Vernon's Critical Deer Wintering Area
- Map 6: Existing Land use in Vernon, 1985
- Map 7: Land Use Plan